

Aide-de-Camp's Library



Rashtrapati Bhavan
New Delhi

Accn. No. _____

1659

Call No. _____

VII (a) F

DALY'S *The Biography*
of a Theatre

DALY'S

THE
BIOGRAPHY OF A
THEATRE

by
D. FORBES - WINSLOW



AUGUSTIN DALY



W. H. ALLEN & CO.,
43, Essex Street, London

First Published 1944

Made and Printed in Great Britain by TURNER & DUNNETT LTD., LIVERPOOL

2

*This book was awarded the
Allen prize in 1943 for the best
work written by a British
journalist.*

CONTENTS

Foreword by Sir Philip Pilditch, Bt., J.P.

PART I. by R. L. Hadfield and H. Hunt Lewis.

Chapter I.	A magician waves his wand	11
Chapter II.	Daly's conquest of London	18
Chapter III.	Queens of the stage	30

PART II. by D. Forbes Winslow.

Chapter I.	A new era begins ...	33
Chapter II.	The Guv'nor's formula ...	39
Chapter III.	The Guv'nor at work—and play	50
Chapter IV.	Success of "The Geisha"	55
Chapter V.	Fifty years a leading lady	59
Chapter VI.	Some great contemporaries	62
Chapter VII.	A glamorous night	67
Chapter VIII.	More melodious money makers	71
Chapter IX.	The Guv'nor's greatest triumph	77
Chapter X.	Another musical masterpiece	86
Chapter XI.	A master of stagecraft....	94
Chapter XII.	Loving Cup for the Guv'nor	99
Chapter XIII.	A reply to the critics	107
Chapter XIV.	Performance in mufti	111
Chapter XV.	When royalty goes to the show	117

Chapter XVI.	The Guv'nor's last curtain	....	....	121
Chapter XVII.	The new Gaiety	....	..	128
Chapter XVIII.	Brides for the nobility	....	....	132
Chapter XIX.	The tradition maintained	....	....	138
Chapter XX.	Triumph of "The Maid"	....	....	143
Chapter XXI.	More Daly's recruits	....	....	151
Chapter XXII.	How stars are born	....	....	156
Chapter XXIII.	Some costly flops	....	....	164
Chapter XXIV.	'Jimmy' White—the meteor	....	....	171
Chapter XXV.	The show goes on	....	....	177
Chapter XXVI.	A quarter of a million deal	....	....	183
Chapter XXVII.	Revivals—then pantomime	....	....	188
Chapter XXVIII.	The final curtain	....	....	194
Epilogue by W. Macqueen Pope		....	....	203

Index of persons.

Illustrations.

Cover design by Louis Curti.

FOREWORD

by Sir Philip Pilditch, Bart., J.P.

I HAVE been asked to write a few words by way of introduction to this long looked-for and admirable history of one of our most well known theatres, which in the course of two generations was conceived, blossomed and, after a most attractive career, has now given place to a building which is perhaps more suitable to ultra-modern tastes.

The reason for my being asked must be that I am probably amongst the very few, perhaps the only survivor of those who took any part in its inception, now so long ago. But I can remember the interest that was shown in theatre-going circles when the news became known that a great American impressario, Augustin Daly, was coming to London to build a theatre in which to carry on on this side of the Atlantic the successful career he had had on the other.

At the beginning, a star of the first magnitude he proposed to open with, was Miss Ada Rehan, a brilliant actress who had made a stir in the United States, of the type of our Edith Evans of the present day.

I was personally, in my twenties, associated with the Architect chosen for the venture, Spencer Chadwick, with whom I collaborated.

He had, however, the more distinguished help of Mr. C. J. Phipps, who was of the highest repute in this type of architecture. Our direct Client, was Mr. George Edwardes who financed the building, having taken a building lease of the land from the Salisbury Estate, to whom it belonged, and the greater part of our relations were consequently with him.

I can well remember, however, Daly himself, a tall, dignified, somewhat austere figure, attired, at the time I first saw him, in a sweeping grey fur coat.

The preliminaries were soon arranged, a site in Cranbourn Street, Leicester Square, secured, and the character of the building to be erected on it was discussed at our office, 17, Parliament Street, on the Western side of lower Whitehall, long since swept away.

I also well remember the opening play, at which I was present, namely : " The Taming of the Shrew," that it was a pronounced success, and that the star went straight to the hearts of English playgoers.

As to the building itself, it was amongst the first, if not the first, theatre in London to be built on the cantilever principle, that is, the tiers were supported on girders radiating from the surrounding walls and kept in position by their weight.

Its size prevented it from being used for anything spectacular requiring a large stage, but it was admirably suited for the style of plays which were soon to be produced in it, first by Daly and after a couple of years by George Edwardes.

I have just turned up our old certificate book and find that the total cost of the building, of which an accurate description is given in the work itself, was, as nearly as possible, £60,000, from which it will be seen that it cost a good deal more than a not large theatre of this kind should have cost at that period. This was due no doubt to the vicissitudes of the building period referred to in the book.

After a run of the Rehan plays with which it opened, Mr. George Edwardes carried on and gave to the public a series of light operas and musical comedies of the " Merry Widow " type, which still greatly delight the British playgoer. Of these I need say nothing, for they are better dealt with, than I could, by the Author.

P.E.P.

27th June, 1944.

PART I.

BY ROBERT L. HADFIELD
AND HILARY HUNT-LEWIS

*"For instance, I, one evening late
Upon a gay vocation sally,
Singing the praise of Church and State
Got, (God knows how) to Cranbourne Alley."*

CHAPTER I.

A MAGICIAN WAVES HIS WAND.

DALY'S Theatre took its name from a man; its story begins with him. Augustin Daly was a remarkable man—journalist, dramatist, author, and one of the most successful of all American managers, whose company achieved such fame that it rivalled the Comédie Française.

Few people are forgotten more easily than theatrical managers. Of the thousands who now pass daily from Leicester Square to Charing Cross Road, how many know that there ever was such a person as Augustin Daly, the first American manager for whom a theatre was built in London? How many realise that not so very long ago that strip of London was a place of squalor, for the clearing of which we owe a debt of gratitude?

Before Daly's Theatre could be built in Cranbourne Street a huddle of courts and low streets, a disgrace to London, had to be swept away. But before the district fell into the disrepute from which Daly rescued it, its story had been a varied one and is certainly not devoid of interest.

Until the 16th century, the area that lies between St. Martin's Lane and Piccadilly on the east and west and between the Royal Mews (where the National Gallery now stands) and Oxford Street was in a state of rural simplicity. The maps of Queen Elizabeth's time, a mixture of plan and picture, show that this part of London consisted of open fields divided by small lanes. Any doubt as to the use to which the fields were put is settled by one picture that depicts the figure of a woman spreading washing out to dry upon the grass.

About the middle of the 17th century, the Marquis of Salisbury, to whom the land belonged, put it to better financial use. Howell, writing in 1657 in "Londonopolis" makes mention of "many gentile fair houses built in a row by the Earl of Salisbury." He was not

very explicit about the site of these houses ; he may have referred to those which formerly existed on the site of Daly's Theatre and ran along Cranbourne Street to the site of the present Hippodrome, or to those nearer the then fashionable residential quarter of St. Martin's Lane. Both clusters are shown on the maps of the period.

In 1660 the fields gave way a little more to the spread of London when a Military Yard was built, but this and a solitary windmill were the only buildings in the wide fields extending to Oxford Street.

Cranbourne Street first came into being as "Cranbourne Alley," a paved thoroughfare for foot-passengers, which in 1678 provided the long-felt need of a footpath connecting St. Martin's Lane with Piccadilly. The name is derived from the ground landlord's title ; the Cecils, Earls of Salisbury, were also Viscounts Cranbourne of Cranbourne in Dorset.

Cranbourne Alley practically founded the district, for a few years after its construction the Edict of Nantes (1685) drove many French Protestants into exile in England, and they descended on London to make Soho their new home. The great square with its magnificent houses became the home of the more aristocratic, whilst those who could not find quarters there settled on the north side of what is now Leicester Square, where Saville House (the site of the Empire Cinema) set the tone of the district. Peter the Great was entertained there in 1698 by the Marquis of Carmarthen, and the smaller houses to the east, along the north side of Cranbourne Alley, were sought by those who desired to bask in the sunshine of the mighty.

Captain Ryder was one of the first to live there ; his name survives in Ryder's Court, which is on the east side of Daly's Theatre.

London is a palimpsest. Under its present surface is written the story of a continuous process of decline and fall. Changing social conditions tell the state. Beneath present grime is past gilt. The mansions of the mighty become apartments, then tenements, and finally slums. So, in course of time, Cranbourne Alley fell from its high state. Behind it sprang up a desert of mean streets, huddles of squalid houses. The better-class people of the district turned away in disgust and left ; petty tradesmen took their place. The gilded parlours became shops. In one of these, under the sign of the "Golden Angel," Ellis Gamble lived and worked at his trade of silver-plate engraving. His apprentice was young Hogarth.

But Cranbourne Alley had not many distinguished crafts. It became principally a clothes market, and later on was celebrated for its millinery, especially cheap straw bonnets. It is a little difficult to judge what its general style was at this time, for descriptions vary.

One authority says, "a Cranbourne Alley article became the common name for what was cheap and vulgar"; but in a letter written when Lady Augusta, daughter of the beautiful Elizabeth Gunning, Duchess of Argyll and Hamilton, eloped with Mr. Clavering, we are told that "the lover had been the day before to Cranbourne Alley and procured every kind of female dress for Lady Augusta," which seems to indicate that the alley was what we should term to-day "exclusive."

Be that as it may, the inhabitants were not above accepting lodgers, and in 1763 Fuseli, the great art critic and minor artist, took lodgings at the house of a Mrs. Green there.

The following year a scandal turned the eyes of fashionable London to Cranbourne Alley. His Grace of Kingston took a fancy to a pretty milliner there and carried her off to Thoresby. The drawing rooms, where the ladies gathered, echoed the shock; but the affair was not altogether surprising, since the "little milliners" of Cranbourne Alley were noted for their chic long before the Paris *midgettes*. It was, in fact, the custom of well-born, marauding males to stroll down the alley, and a common sight, we learn, was to see them gathered together at a pastry-cook's door, devouring raspberry puffs after the exertion of ogling the pretty girls.

Not only where the shop-girls lovely, but the shoppers also. A book of the period attests: "I believe I know where Paradise is situated. It is certainly in Cranbourne Alley. For there are so many pretty faces to be seen glittering about the bonnet shops on a fine morning that it is impossible to believe that Paradise can be elsewhere."

But in spite of its fame, this thoroughfare remained a little alley until 1843. In that year the houses on the south side were demolished and the alley was widened into a street large enough for the construction of a carriageway from Coventry Street to Long Acre. The change, however, did not improve its social status, perhaps because the squalid condition of Leicester Square, now deserted by fashionable London, had become a wilderness of grass, broken bottles, and dead cats; perhaps because it impinged on the southern section of the poorest part of Soho, now populated chiefly by destitute French Republicans and Italian Mazzinians. In the blackest poverty they existed in a gloomy maze of alleys at the back of Cranbourne Street. Since Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road had not been planned to let in light and air, the only vent from this foul congestion was the comparative openness of Cranbourne Street.

The bloody suppression of the Paris Commune in May, 1871, threw a mass of Communards into this already seriously congested

quarter. Between the '50's' and the '70's' a large number of foreign women of bad repute established themselves in Cranbourne Street. There was nothing of the "little bits of fluff" about them; many of them were grim, desperate harpies, crime-hardened. Decent people dared not walk that way, and the authorities seemed incapable of taking any steps to end a scandal which certainly helped to give London its sinister reputation in those years.

Ryder's Court was equally notorious in another way. There lived Bailey, commonly called "The Tailor" to distinguish him from Bailey "The Milkman." As young men these two had been pillars of the Chartist Party; in their old age they were ready to support any extreme revolutionary movement or to further any plot which might be hatched in the little French eating-house known by the imposing name of "Restaurant de l'Internationale" or in the Black Swan on the other side of Ryder's Court.

Revolutionaries and loose women combined their anti-social energies and the name of this district became a synonym of depravity. It was such when Augustin Daly arrived with his celebrated company to thrill London, and later England.

The company's success was instantaneous and complete. London prostrated itself and asked for more. Daly came five times to London, and it was while planning the sixth visit that the project for building Daly's Theatre was born. When Daly began to lay plans for his sixth visit he found that there was no theatre available, and with characteristic initiative and energy he decided to establish a permanent theatre for himself. By bringing Ada Rehan to London he created such a following that his ambition had sound commercial roots. When George Edwardes heard of the project he said to Daly, "I'll build you a theatre and let you have a long lease of it at £5,000 a year."

In those days a theatre cost only about £40,000 to build and equip, but Daly was ready to agree to the terms, and the two men got together. Both were alive to trends. Theatrical London was moving steadily westward, and after looking round Daly decided that in Cranbourne Street he had found his site.

Hollingshead, writing of the neighbourhood as it was at that time, sums up tersely: "The sweepings of the Low Countries own the right of way and its proper name is not Cranbourne Street but Moll Flanders Parade. The authorities and owners of valuable property on the north side, including the government which owns the big post office, appear to be unable or unwilling to remove this metropolitan disgrace which has developed for at least a dozen years. It is probably left to an American to do work that ought to be done by

an Englishman. When Mr. Augustin Daly takes possession of his new theatre he will clear up this muck in twenty-four hours."

Hollingshead was an optimist. Augustin Daly certainly did clean the stables but it took him more than twenty-four hours.

To make way for the theatre, the houses in Ryder's Court were demolished, and with them went the eating house, where revolutions had been planned, the shops facing Cranbourne Street, and the huddle of squalid houses at the back. Early in October, 1891, Mr. George Edwardes sent out cards requesting "the pleasure of . . . 's company on Friday morning, October 30th, at twelve o'clock to witness the ceremony of laying the Foundation Stone by Miss Ada Rehan of the new theatre which is being constructed for Mr. Augustin Daly. Entrance in Coventry Street. R.S.V.P."

The invitations were snapped up joyfully. On the great day a crowd of celebrated people assembled. Present were Mr. (later Sir) Squire Bancroft and his wife, Marie Wilton, gayest of comedienues ; Mrs. Bernard Beere, the lovely lady who had risen from a flowerstall in the Alhambra to become the English Bernhardt ; Sir Augustus Harris, Edward Terry, and many others who had a place in the country's heart. George Edwardes, or to call him by the name he bore throughout the profession, the Guv'nor, presented Ada Rehan with a trowel and said a few graceful words to the effect that he hoped the building of the theatre would cement the English and American stage still more closely. The foundation stone was placed in position and Ada Rehan declared it well and truly laid. Mrs. Bancroft performed the christening ceremony by speaking some lines specially written for the occasion by Clement Scott and breaking a bottle of champagne against the stone.

It was a novel idea to christen a theatre as if it were a ship, but no one had considered the explosive properties of champagne. When the bottle broke, glass splinters flew far and wide, and William Yardley, the burlesque writer, was rather badly cut.

Although Daly did not own the theatre, it had been decided to name it after him ; it was built for him, and his name was a valuable commercial asset. He was its first manager, and his company opened it. The date announced was June, 1893.

The fixing of a definite opening date at so early a period was typical of Daly. Whenever he had undertaken a project everything was mapped out, timed, arranged ahead, and he expected his schedule to be rigidly adhered to. His contract with George Edwardes called for the completion of the theatre by Lady Day, 1893. This fixed, Daly returned to America, confident that the theatre was as good as built.

Neither Daly nor Edwardes, however, had taken the British workman into account. A nation-wide strike in the building trade broke out and held up work to such a degree that when Daly returned to England, expecting to find his new theatre ready, he saw with amazement and horror that the "theatre" consisted of little more than bare exterior walls and a roof. And this in May, one month before the promised opening date. Daly noted with grim satisfaction that at least the men were back at work!

Architect and contractors swore that it would be impossible for the theatre to be ready in June; but they did not know Augustin Daly. Instead of tearing his hair and abandoning the whole project in disgust he brought his cold, deadly efficiency to bear on the problem. Establishing himself in a builder's shack in the street alongside the work, he appointed himself general supervisor. He was probably the first Stakanovite in the building industry! To find a contemporary parallel one would have to go to Mr. Henry J. Kaiser, dynamo of American war-time shipping construction. Double shifts of workmen were spurred by his furious energy. He swept away every difficulty, declared that everything was possible. He infused the phlegmatic workmen with his own tireless spirit, his bounding optimism. His indomitable will was a magician. Hour by hour the theatre rose, seemingly conjured out of air by the man who simply would not rest. All theatrical London watched the drama, certain that the end of June would see the curtain fall on Daly's hopes. But on the 27th day of that month—on June 27th, 1893—all was ready, the theatre was finished, a masterpiece of architectural and decorative art.

The story of Daly's success rapidly became a legend. A new theatre was something of a thrill in those days; this theatre was almost unbelievable. Crowds gathered to see the wonder. The building had a curiously unfamiliar appearance in the 19th century London. It was quiet and dignified; it reflected "a sense of sobriety and good taste."

The Times pronounced judgment in measured tones: "It has nothing of the cheapness and loudness which is the besetting sin of theatrical decoration. From an exterior of handsome yellow stone in the Italian Renaissance style the eye falls upon a vestibule with walls and ceiling of white enamel, bearing exquisitely modelled cupids and nude figures in relief; thence upon an auditorium rich in blendings of silver and gold and in fine inlaid woodwork. The proscenium is a deeply moulded gold arch; the front of the balconies shows upon a silver ground a variety of figures in relief which are lacquered,

not gilt, a pretty detail being that one of the cupids, who act as sailors in boats of gold, blows upon a reed pipe bubbles which are lit with electric light, while the inlaid woodwork of the stalls and other portions of the house imparts a sense of comfort and luxury new to theatre-goers.

“Rich red paperings cover the walls and the same tone runs into the upholstery. A striking feature of the decorations is the number of figures in relief in the moulding in which the plastic hand of Sir Alfred Gilbert, R.A., is felt; another is the curious metallic effect of the gold and silver decoration.

“The drop curtain, somewhat loud in tone, shows the figure of Comedy in the person of Miss Rehan, surrounded by cupids. The theatre was designed by Mr. W. Spencer Chadwick in consultation with Mr. C. J. Phipps.”

So the theatre was built and all was now ready for the opening night. To bring success, Daly, who was a devout Catholic, placed over the lintels a number of holy medals. There, out of sight of the thousands who passed into the theatre, they hung where Augustin Daly placed them with his own hand. There they remained until the day when the sumptuous building was demolished to make way for the new shrine of a new art.

CHAPTER II.

DALY'S CONQUEST OF LONDON.

AUGUSTIN DALY was a dramatic critic at twenty-one. In the ordinary way the criticisms of so young and inexperienced a man would have carried little weight ; but Daly possessed a natural flair for the theatre, which was consistently demonstrated throughout his career. Within nine years, that is, between 1859 and 1868, he became dramatic critic of the *New York Times*, *Express* and *Star*, and other journals ; he adapted *Leah, the Forsaken*, and wrote his first play, *Under the Gaslight*.

This play is now forgotten by all except those who have a taste for period plays. It is a rather sensational melodrama, and, according to the style of the time, it had pathos, character and comedy. Certainly it was one of the best of its kind that came from America to England, and it soon became a "stock" piece here and an item in that curious collection, "Dick's Standard Plays" in which the old stock-companies found their repertoires.

In the same year in which Daly wrote *Under the Gaslight* he began management in New York, and two years later established his Fifth Avenue Theatre. This was burnt down in 1873, but Daly was not the man to be deterred by such a disaster. He collected the insurance money and built another house.

It was for his first theatre that he engaged Mrs. Gilbert and Mr. Lewis, two players who were with him for many years and came with him to England when he opened Daly's twenty-four years later. Although Daly was often summed up as a "curious individual," an expert in the gentle art of making enemies and a man oppressed with a sense of his own importance, he possessed that excellent quality of a manager, the ability to keep his people. Actors are touchy folk, and those whom Daly gathered round him were not of a kind to suffer in silence for the sake of their pay envelopes ; they were great artists and would have been welcome assets in any company that aspired to rival Daly's. Doubtless they were wise enough to humour his foibles and laugh tolerantly at him in secret. It was a tradition that members of his companies were not to approach him without due ceremony. Even so, there was unusual regret when he retired temporarily from management in 1878.

Discriminating in his judgment of both actors and plays, Daly built up an extremely loyal, admiring and numerous clientele. His experience of the public taste was vast, and from the day that he opened his first theatre (a hall in Brooklyn, and, without a cent of capital, ran an excellent repertory) he never looked back, artistically, in spite of several financial crises.

Genius has its eccentricities, and Daly was something of a genius. In his calm moments he had great dignity. His face in repose had the gentle, dreamy look of a poet. He had magnetic eyes and a smile that urged everyone to do their best for him. But there were other moods.

Daly lived for the theatre, and at rehearsals he was a wonder. He would sit about five rows back in the stalls, his long legs sprawling, his arms folded, his keen eyes watching everything, his hat on the back of his head. When anything did not please him he would spring to his feet, leap on to the stage (he had a portable "ramp" ready for such emergencies) with coat-tails flying and words flowing. Gesturing wildly and striking attitudes to illustrate his meaning, he would show exactly what he wanted done, finishing up with an emphatic "Now do you see?" Then he would leap back to his place in the stall.

He was no actor; his deportment was ungainly and he spoke the lines badly; but he was always able to convey the spirit of what he wanted, for he had in him the stuff of a creative artist. They said he could make a broomstick act.

Stage aspirants and experienced players were eager to get into his company. The latter invariably went out better artists than they came in. Daly demanded perfection in every detail. A young society girl once came under his banner and was cast for the part of a maid. It was almost an accepted tradition in plays of that period that a maid should be "discovered dusting." The girl dusted. Daly watched for a few moments as the girl flicked a duster with dainty and graceful touch.

"Dust, girl, dust, don't dance!" yelled Daly, taking his celebrated leap on to the stage. With wild gesture and picturesque oaths, he showed her how to dust.

More languid dusting followed.

"Heavens above, woman! Haven't you ever dusted furniture?" demanded Daly.

The haughty girl eyed him coldly. "No, sir, I distinctly have *not*."

Daly turned to the patient Moore, his prompter for many years.

"Send for little Flagg. She at least can dust."

And that was the end of the society girl.

Daly saw to every detail himself. He would take one rehearsal in the morning, another in the afternoon, attend to business between times, and then be at the theatre at night, creeping behind the scenes with a gracious smile if all was going well, but with a face like a tragic mask if the smallest detail had been overlooked. If there was any real trouble he would tear about like a madman, swearing like a navvy.

But he took a personal interest in every member of his cast and prided himself that he knew every member. On one occasion this proved to be rather an idle boast.

Peeping from the wings one night just as the human game of chess was set in *The Royal Middy* he saw one of the little pawns looking very startled, and a moment later the child's trousers slipped down, revealing a very short and homely pair of pants.

Daly shot out a hand, grabbed the little boy by the scruff of the neck, and lifted him off the stage, trailing his trousers behind him. Daly fixed the trousers and replaced the child on the stage amid roars of delight from the audience.

The following night he cast an eye over the pawns before they went on and standing before a little boy, demanded, "Well, sir, how are your trousers to-night?" The little chap was too frightened to reply and hung his head. Daly repeated the question. The boy started to cry.

"Come, come, child, answer me," coaxed Daly kindly.

"Please, sir, it wasn't my trousers that came off."

Daly never allowed anything to interfere with the business of the play, and to keep the company always up to the mark he imposed fines for any lapses, rising to a penalty of five dollars for missing an entrance.

One day Ada Rehan and he were chatting in his private office when the call-boy, not finding her in her dressing-room, came in search of her. He heard her laugh and he heard Daly laugh.

"Donna Antonina," he called.

But Daly was telling Ada Rehan one of his best stories and she was so engrossed that she did not hear the call-boy. Neither did Daly.

A minute or two later the call-boy rushed back, shouting, "Donna Antonina! Stage waits!"

A scream, a swirl of silken skirts, and Ada Rehan was rushing for the stage. Daly was still laughing at his own good story—but he fined Miss Rehan five dollars.

A quotation from *Macbeth* is considered in all theatrical companies to bring bad luck and must therefore never be spoken behind the scenes, but in Daly's Theatre this hoodoo rested on the music of *Pinafore*. This is rather curious, as the relations between Sullivan and Daly were most cordial and Sullivan wrote a considerable amount of music for Daly's play productions; but if any artist dared to play or hum a few bars from *Pinafore* near Daly he was howled into silence.

It had quickly become known in the business world that in his theatre no artist was permitted to approach Daly without certain ceremonies, but this was only done to prevent too many interruptions. He had to be jealous of his privacy, and had a special watch-dog in the person of a big Irishman to keep callers at bay.

Mark Twain used to tell how he once tried to see Daly, whom he knew well, during business hours. The big Irishman looked at him scornfully. "What d'ye want?" he demanded.

"To see Mr. Daly."

"Well, you can't see Mr. Daly. And ye can't smoke here. Take that cigar out of your mouth. If ye want to see Mr. Daly ye'll have to be agoing to the front of the house and buying a ticket, and then, if ye have luck and he's around that way, ye may see him."

That was how they used to treat celebrities behind the scenes at Daly's when Augustin ruled the theatre.

Daly was generous with money but a great stickler for the last word of a contract. He would spite himself rather than see a clause broken. He paid Sardou a big retaining fee (20,000 francs) to write a play with a leading part for Miss Rehan. This was to be performed in Paris. Sardou took the fee, but to Daly's indignation he wrote a play for Mr. Frohman first. Sardou calmly answered Daly's protest that the play for Mr. Frohman was half written when he entered on his contract with Daly, that the leading part in the Frohman play would not have suited Miss Rehan, and that, moreover, this play was to be produced in America and did not therefore clash with Daly's play.

Not to be outdone, Daly wrote and told Sardou that he was trying to get out on a quibble and added that he could see he was dealing with a not very conscientious man; he declined to have anything further to do with Sardou and ended on a burst of indignation, "You may keep the money of mine you have, for I shall claim no play from you, even if it were the best you ever wrote."

Sardou replied: "I stick to my right. I accept the break and I keep the money. Your servant, Vict. Sardou."

Daly had one hobby outside the theatre—books. His library was

famous, and it was a cause of great regret that it was sold piecemeal after his death, for many of the volumes had a personal interest. His taste was varied. In 1892 the collection was enriched by an illustrated Bible, for which Daly had gathered every known engraving suitable for insertion in a folio volume. The task of sorting the prints and putting them in order took an expert two years, and when bound, this Bible consisted of forty-one volumes.

In connection with the Bible, though not this particular volume, a strange thing occurred to Daly in his earlier days. The first time he entered his office in the Grand Opera House, one of his American theatres, a single leaf from a Bible blew in through the open window. The last verses on the leaf were Luke XIV., 28, 29, 30—"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him: saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish." The memory of this incident haunted Daly when he came to England and found his theatre unfinished.

It is strange that this man who held a unique place on the American stage is chiefly remembered for having presented Ada Rehan to the world.

Her life apart from the theatre was very simple. She never married, she had no "affaires"; no stories of temperament trail after her; she was never involved in anything more serious than an occasional outbreak of the giggles on the stage, though she dreaded this weakness. When John Drew was Daly's leading man, he took a wicked delight in playing on it, making Ada laugh during her parts so irrepressibly that she was often afraid to go near him.

She was a general favourite, and one young girl in the company has left this impression of her: ¹

"I admire Ada Rehan; she has a merry way with her, such an odd yet musical voice and accent, and she seems very nice and pleasant too, with no silly airs or affectation. She is not exactly pretty but she has the sweetest smile and a dear deep dimple in her cheek. She is very tall but very graceful and has fluffy reddish hair and more than a few freckles. There is something very fascinating about her, especially when she laughs."

Ada Rehan was simple, studious, but full of fun. Her acting style was set to the music of blank verse, and in old comedy she had the right key with bravura in the grand manner. She was the idol of America, and England and France worshipped her too. Like many

¹ "Diary of a Daly Débutante."

of the great actresses who belonged to one particular company she was absolutely Daly's leading lady. She became his partner in Daly's Theatre. Her whole life was given to her art and centred on that of Augustin Daly. After his death she tried for two years to carry on ; but the fashion in acting was changing and she could not change. She retired and died in 1916, leaving a fortune of 200,000 dollars, partly derived from her partnership with Daly.

Daly's retirement in 1878 turned out to be nothing more than an extended holiday in Europe. On his return to New York he again plunged into theatrical work and opened Daly's Theatre there. He was by now the author of several plays, a great figure in the theatrical world, but in a sense his career had not yet started, and in 1880 he signed his name to a contract which was the beginning of his fame on two sides of the world and resulted eventually in London's possessing a landmark which used to bear his name. This contract was the engagement of the talented and charming Ada Rehan to play leading parts in Daly's company.

There are few things more difficult than to recall an actress who has passed on. Acting can leave no indelible impression save on the minds of those who witness the performance, and no descriptions, no pictures can convey to others the charm or the thrill experienced by actual witnesses. One looks at a photograph of Ada Rehan and sees a pleasant-faced woman whose features bear the rather suppressed expression usual to photographs of her day ; her wonderful dress now looks to be rather quaint. And that is all. From this, we of to-day have to build a mental picture of a woman who had but to speak to hold her listeners spellbound, and who had all the charm of her two great Irish forerunners, Nell Gwynne and Margaret Woffington. She sparkled into joyousness, melted into tears. Chiefly she was a daughter of pure and high comedy, yet she could rollick and frolic. She spoke Shakespeare as only the genius can. Even in England, where Ellen Terry was at the height of her power, Ada Rehan was hailed as a genius.

Her first visit to England made theatrical history. The Daly Company came to Toole's Theatre as strangers, but so great was their success that before their brief visit was over they had come to be regarded as belonging to the English stage just as much as to the American. They were acknowledged as equals to the *Comédie Française*, but particularly did London pay homage to the charm, originality, and humour of Ada Rehan, who could play Shakespearean comedy and Anglo-German farce with equal grace and perfection.

The company returned two years later, playing at the Strand

Theatre for ten weeks, during which time Wycherley's old comedy, *The Country Girl*, which is Garrick's version of *The Country Wife*, was revived. England had accepted Daly's company in its own repertory and had admitted its right to perform Shakespeare, Shakespeare having written for all men in all countries for all time ; but now the Americans were treading on purely English ground and the critics were keen to discover faults, especially in Ada Rehan. She was taking up a part made famous by Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Jordan more than a hundred years before and since included in the repertory of our most famous comedienues. Ada Rehan passed the test splendidly ; it was a part in which she excelled herself, and the entire company supported her magnificently.

Daly's next visit, in 1888, was extended to thirteen weeks, his company playing this time at the old Gaiety Theatre. Here Ada Rehan played Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew*, giving a performance that made the crustiest critic admit that at last Shakespeare's ideal of the part had come into being. Ada Rehan has always been considered the perfect Katherine.

The fourth and fifth visits, in 1890 and 1891, were to the Lyceum, where the success of the production of *As You Like It* was as great as that of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

That more is said of Ada Rehan than the rest of the company arises from the fact that, excellent as all the other members of the cast were, the allure of this truly great actress was almost incredible. It cannot be compared to the contemporary film-star's quickly passing fame, flickering up for a short time among easily incited admirers and then forgotten. Ada Rehan attained similar heights of popular adulation, but the admiration she aroused lasted ; moreover, it was extended to the thoughtful and the cultured. Poets, critics, authors wrote lauding her genius and her beauty ; she appealed to the cultured and the uncultured, and even when Augustin Daly had done his worst with the blue pencil, scratching out divine lines from Shakespeare, she made Shakespeare's heroines the living, loving, delightful women they were intended to be. In passing it can be said that she could also breathe the breath of life into rubbish so consummate was her art.

The prodigious success of these seasons resulted in Daly's conviction that he must have a permanent theatre in London. Henry Irving could not give him the time he wanted at the Lyceum, neither could the management of the Haymarket ; so, as previously described, the theatre in Cranbourne Street was conceived and built, Daly coming to it with a company of sixty-one principals and nineteen for the chorus or "walk on" parts.

The formation of this company proved that Daly was a man apart. The world was used to small casts supported by crowds. He filled his stage with stars.

There is an old tradition (now perhaps forgotten, as many traditions appear to be) that a new theatre should never be opened with a new play. Daly was sufficiently human to observe this tradition. He opened Daly's with a play Londoners loved, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and for it Henry Irving wrote a "Welcome."

This in itself was a magnificent gesture and shows the "bigness" of the great Victorians. Daly might well turn out to be one of Irving's greatest rivals. He had a company equal to Irving's own; he was playing Shakespeare, which was Irving's glory; he came with a leading lady as attractive as Ellen Terry.

Dangerous to Daly's venture might have been the Comédie Française, which was playing at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, at the time, and even without Bernhardt, who was absent from the cast during this season, the company was a serious counter-attraction. But it happened that the Comédie Française had a disappointing season.

At Daly's Theatre there was a magnificent company, and if George Clarke, the leading man, displayed a few Americanisms in manner and speech, his Petruchio was always interesting, while old Mr. Lewis had established himself on former visits as a firm favourite. The Daly company was, in fact, no stranger company, but a known and much favoured one which was opening a new house.

The opening on June 27th, 1893, was a gala night; every seat was filled; the critics raved over the theatre and the acting, and were as fulsome as the general public.

The Taming of the Shrew was played for only two weeks, but London went mad about it, and every professional who could find the time went to Daly's to "pick the brains" of the company. For years afterwards celebrated English actresses openly admitted that they had modelled their Katherine on Ada Rehan's, declaring that she was perfection and that all they could do was to imitate as closely as possible.

Daly believed in variety, and the next play was Sheridan Knowles' *Hunchback*. As Arthur Bouchier appeared in this (a fact which brings the Daly company very near to us) a current criticism may be of interest. "Miss Rehan's grace and winsomeness," it ran, "invests the old play with attraction, her Julia is intelligible and attractive. George Clarke is a better Walter than Petruchio. Mr. Arthur Bouchier makes his first appearance as one of Mr. Daly's comedians in the part of Sir Thomas Clifford, which suits his light and easy style. . . ."

In that company they were profound believers in work. Social life and "meeting people" had no place in their scheme of things. Thus, only a week later, *Love in Tandem* was produced. This play, which had been produced at the Odeon in Paris four years before under the title of *La Vie a Deux* with M^{me} Rejane as the lively heroine, rather shocked London—but it tickled the palate. The story was rather extravagant to English ears with its mock love scenes, facile divorce, and clash of temperaments, but, we are told, "Ada Rehan takes the part with sprightliness and vivacity which never loses refinement in the petty quarrels and reconciliations of early married life."

Arthur Bouchier played Richard Dymond to Miss Rehan's Aprilla, and George Clarke and Violet Vanbrugh the two divorced people.

After this came a much needed summer recess, and the next season opened with *Dollars and Sense*, a light comedy which the company knew well. This was played while Lord Tennyson's last play, *The Foresters*, was being prepared. In *Dollars and Sense*, Bouchier and Rehan were again playing the leads together, young and bashful lovers. Ada Rehan, as a not entirely artless maiden, let her high spirits turn to a boisterous and even a tomboyish mood; so much so that one old critic said tersely, "To Mr. Arthur Bouchier is committed the difficult part of acting up to Miss Rehan." Mrs. Gilbert and Mr. Lewis were in their familiar roles as the overbearing wife and the henpecked husband. It was a foolish trifle, but London laughed and enjoyed it immensely.

Then came *The Foresters*, for which great preparations had been made. The Poet Laureate has written a great play in *Becket*, with the result that another such was expected. Tennyson, however, had written *The Foresters* as a woodland masque, but it was advertised as a poetical comedy, and those who went to the theatre to have their heart-strings torn with poetic frenzy left disappointed. They could not associate Tennyson with a play obviously influenced by *As You Like It* and with the light touch with which the story of Maid Marian and Robin Hood was told. They went to the theatre with the idea fixed in their minds that they were to see a second *Becket*, and not all the lavish staging and fine acting could compensate them. *The Foresters* ran only a few nights.

Although this play was a failure it earned a little place in theatrical history as being the first in which electric light was used on the stage, that is, employed to enhance the beauty of the dresses. Electric light was still something of a novelty in itself. It had been introduced for the first time into the London theatre by Hollingshead, manager

of the Gaiety, in 1878. Hollingshead had seen the Joblochskoff light in Paris and had been greatly impressed. Unable to secure a machine for this, he obtained the Lontin light, and the use of his lamps dazzled the public. The Gaiety streamed with radiance. Professor Erasmus Wilson, perhaps a little sore because a theatre-manager was the first to make public use of this almost unexplored side of electricity, said, "With regard to electric light, much has been said for and against it, but I think I may say without fear of contradiction that when the Paris Exhibition closes, the electric light will close with it and very little more will be heard about it."

But the light of the Gaiety plunged the Professor's words into darkness; other theatres followed suit, and soon nearly every London theatre had put out their gas-lights for ever. Electric light still retained its power to excite comment, and in one of the criticisms of *The Foresters* appeared the following: "Incongruous though it may be in action, the fairy scene, in which the electric light is ingeniously employed to tip the wands of the elves, is the prettiest and likely to prove the most attractive in the play."

But even the electric-tipped wands did not save the play and it had to be taken off. There followed one of Augustin Daly's adaptations from the German, *The Last Word*, which was played for a fortnight, then *The Orient Express*, and on November 13th came *The School for Scandal*.

Daly re-arranged and pruned the text. This was done, he said, "mainly in the interests of the American public, whose palates were thought to be somewhat too delicate for the strong meat of Sheridan." For the violence thus offered to an English classic he atoned by stripping the dialogue of some of the least commendable of the gags engrafted upon it by successive generations of comedians.

Of Miss Rehan's performance one critic said, "A first rate representative of the character, a Mrs. Jordan or a Mdme Vestris, is unknown to the modern stage where neither Mrs. Bancroft nor Mrs. Bernard Beere has found the atmosphere of Old Comedy entirely congenial. By Miss Ada Rehan's embodiment of a heroine who combines the gifts of wit and heart in equal proportions a gap has unquestionably been filled. The American actress has shown a rare genius for modern comedy, but her Rosalind haunts the memory as a charming creation and her first essay in Sheridan, which last night attracted a brilliant house, must be set down as another triumph to be added to the many she has already won in widely differing fields."

It is distinctly part of the history of Daly's Theatre that two of Miss Rehan's performances "set the pace" and moulded the form

of successive actresses in Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew* and Lady Teazle in *The School for Scandal*. That this should have been achieved by an American actress who flashed like a meteor across the English stage, rather than from an established English artiste is remarkable. A thoughtful essayist wrote of her last-named part words that are worthy of remembrance :

"The keynote of Miss Rehan's impersonation is the fact, not seldom overlooked by young actresses who think only of their patches and powder, that Lady Teazle is a country girl. For the time being she is carried away by her first experience of fashionable life ; she is a flirt and a tease and her womanly feelings are obscured by the exigencies of her novel position as lady of quality. But in the presence of danger which suddenly rises up in her path her true womanhood asserts itself and Sir Peter's happiness is assured. How delightfully Miss Rehan portrays the diverse aspects of this complex character none who have followed her performances in London need be told. The wonderful tenderness of the part, as now revealed, is a novel charm of which the public last night were not slow to mark their appreciation."

Ada Rehan bade farewell in 1894 by playing the part in which she was so well beloved, Rosalind. There was a wonderful cast. John Craig was Orlando ; George Clarke, Jacques ; John Lewis, Touchstone ; William Farren, Old Adam (the one part we are certain William Shakespeare played himself) ; Celia was played by Sybil Carlisle and Phoebe by Ida Molesworth.

"The Stage," always downright and no respecter of persons said, "The play has not escaped some of the editing and innovation dear to Mr. Daly. That need not occasion much particular remark now. The chorus, 'what shall he have that killed the dear?' occupying a scene to itself in Act IV., need only be singled out for its eccentric setting and lighting—a fantastic framework of leafage in greyish purple to a background suffused in roseate hues. The lighting is unequal ; sometimes excellent, sometimes of a kind that never was seen on land or sea—and, moreover, not wanted on the stage. One other point without hypercriticism, the stridulous dragging out of the word 'Rosalind' with a long o and an even longer i is vulgar and wants more sensitive treatment."

But even this carping critic could only speak well of Rosalind. He could find no fault with her.

After the last performance Augustin Daly made a speech expressing his thanks for the cordial support of public and Press and promising to come back with his company in the following May. This promise

aroused enthusiasm. Daly's company had now an established place in the heart of the British public and had left a mark on theatrical enterprise. Daly's productions had set London talking and thinking.

If Irving cut or altered a line of Shakespeare questions immediately arose ; Daly slashed Shakespeare about almost as much as Garrick had and very few seemed to mind. He had a fondness in all his plays (particularly noticeable in *The School for Scandal*) of amalgamating scenes into one complete act. Herein his influence was extensive, for the notion spread, and not only to revivals ; new plays inclined more and more to unbroken acts which unfolded the story in sustained action. Daly was, therefore, in a sense the first of all "continuity-writers." In production he was excessively elaborate, especially in period plays, and in this also he left his mark.

In the latter end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th a good production was an elaborate one. It is true that as early as 1881 William Poel had asserted his contention that we should return to the simplicity of the Elizabethan theatre, and he had produced *Hamlet* without scenery and without act or scene divisions ; but this great man, undoubted pioneer of modern stage methods, had not yet entered into his kingdom ; his influence although widespreading eventually was of slow growth.

In 1894 the public wanted to feast their eyes on stage wonders. Daly supplied the wonders, and the fact is that Daly had greater influence on this part of stage work than is generally remembered.

Ada Rehan has become little more than a name even to those who know theatrical history, and Daly is remembered simply by the name bestowed on his theatre ; but both live by the seed they have sown.

CHAPTER III.

QUEENS OF THE STAGE.

AUGUSTIN DALY'S comet blazed for two dazzling seasons. When finally it fell, Daly's Theatre did not pass into eclipse, for a new production star was there—George Edwardes.

Daly never really took root in London. His tremendous success here was from the first a daring piece of exploration by a producer of genius who could never rest so long as there were new worlds to conquer.

After two seasons his conquest of London was complete and he passed out like a meteor, leaving behind a trail of glittering memories. There can be no greater tribute to Edwardes than to say that the light of Daly's Theatre was undimmed after Augustin returned to America.

Apparently, he left his London triumph with some reluctance. In this traditionally "cold" capital he had overcome all the material and moral obstacles that had threatened to wreck his venture at the beginning. He broke down much of London's theatrical insularity, opened a window on a new world by using the stage of Daly's Theatre to present foreign stars to the London public.

He said aptly in his farewell speech that the theatre might well have been called "The Cosmopolitan".

When Ada Rehan, the magnificent, made her final exit, Eleanora Duse, the great Italian, whose art was destined to revolutionise acting technique, entered with Cesare Rossi. They opened at Daly's in *La Dame aux Camelias* and failed to conquer critics and audiences who had already seen Sarah Bernhardt in the part. One critic summed up the general view: "She is not a Bernhardt, but in her own field she is an actress of the very first rank."

Duse was to reach sublime heights of tragedy; but in London her reputation was a slow growth. Then, as now, the London public was loyal to established favourites, and perhaps there was some resentment that Duse should tread the ground of *La Dame aux Camelias*, which had been hallowed by the Divine Sarah.

When Eleanora played in *Divorcons*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *La Locandiera*, she attracted a large and enthusiastic band of devotees; but she never had London at her feet. George Edwardes, a perfect diagnostician of popular taste, certainly knew that the general public, clamouring for obvious novelty, could see nothing new in Duse's revolutionary art.

Yet there is no ready-made formula for success. George Edwardes' first production at Daly's Theatre was also the first production in England of Humperdinck's charming fairy-story opera *Hansel and Gretel*. The opening night was December 26, 1894. The story of this opera was taken from Grimm and is a version of *The Babes in the Wood*. It was what would now be called in theatrical circles a "natural" for Christmas: and Humperdinck's music was as fine then as it is now universally acknowledged to be. But judged by triumphs to come, *Hansel and Gretel* was only a moderate success, although the cast included Marie Elba and Jeanne Douste as Hansel and Gretel, Edith Miller as the Ogress, and Mme. Lennox as Gertrude. It ran for 161 performances.

George Edwardes, however, had a trump ready to play—*An Artist's Model*. But more of this later.

Before Duse's visit was over, a special matinee was given at Daly's by Miss Janotha, then one of the most popular pianists. The Princess of Wales, her daughters, and the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg were in the great audience that listened to Janotha's rendering of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" and a Mazurka of her own composition. Antoinette Stirling and Mme. Amy Sherwin, supported by students from the Guildhall School of Music, sang. J. M. Coward was the organist and Achille Rivarde the violinist. But the event that made the matinee "big" theatrically was a sketch "Journeys End in Lovers' Meeting." It had a cast of three—Forbes-Robertson, William Terriss, and Ellen Terry. Ellen Terry, the matchless, was nervous but wonderful. She roused the house to a storm of enthusiasm. Only those who remember her in her prime can recall the pleasure, almost painful in its intensity; and without beauty, she transcended beauty. Her grace and acting were impeccable; her voice made prose a song, poetry a full orchestra.

Then after Rehan, Duse and Terry came Bernhardt into the cavalcade of dramatic genius of Daly's Theatre.

The great Sarah was already an established London favourite.

In her opening play at Daly's, *Izyl*, she had one of those parts in which she excelled—the courtesan who entices her lover along the primrose path to a tragic end—the familiar motif of *La Dame aux Camélias*, *Theodore*, *Tosca*, *Cleopatra*, in all of which she was triumphant.

Bernhardt was supported by the celebrated M. Guitry. *Les Rois*, in which they played together, disappointed London. It was political, and politics were not wanted on the English stage; moreover, the play did not give enough scope to Bernhardt. It was followed by

La Femme de Claude, the shortest of Alexandre Dumas' plays, and the subject of the longest preface that ever came from his pen. Two performances were a triumph for Bernhardt and Guitry.

Possibly no other theatre in London can boast that in less than six months it has presented four such celebrated people as the acknowledged queens of the stage of four countries in addition to such players as the elder Guitry, Forbes-Robertson, Terriss and Arthur Bourchier.

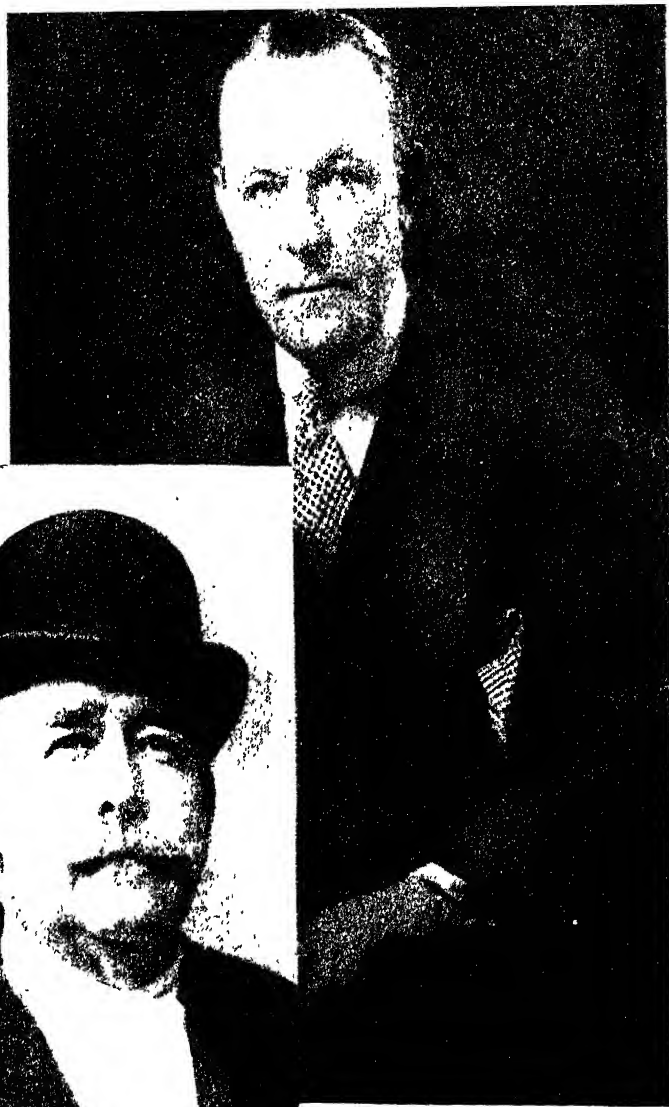
The Daly's company appeared in *The Railroad of Love* in June, 1895, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* in July, 1895, *Midsummer Night's Dream* also in July, 1895, and *Nancy and Co.* in July, 1895.

This was an unprecedented beginning, and could be maintained only by repetition. But repetition ran dry; and George Edwardes announced that he was going to put on a musical comedy.



above
EVIE GREENE

left
MABEL GREEN



Above
GEORGE GRAVES



left
GEORGE EDWARDES
The Guv'nor.

PART II.

By D. FORBES-WINSLOW.

CHAPTER I.

A NEW ERA BEGINS.

THE time was ripe. A desire for the new and novel, known to the highbrows of the period as the mood of *fin de siècle*, was stirring in the theatre-going public. Edwardes responded to it more sensitively than any popular manager of his time.

Hansel and Gretel was a measuring stick. It fell short of a smash hit because the story was not sufficiently sophisticated for an audience that liked fairy stories of its own period set to tuneful music.

Edwardes' second production at Daly's was *An Artist's Model*.

It opened on February 2, 1895, ran for 405 performances, and began a period at the theatre of all-time record business.

The author of the book, Owen Hall, and the composer, Sidney Jones, hit the bull's eye of popular taste; but it was the Guv'nor's perfect casting and production that made success a certainty. In the cast were Letty Lind, Lottie Venne, Leonora Braham, Marie Tempest, Eric Lewis, J. Farren Soutar (son of Nellie Farren), Maurice Farkoa, W. Blakeley and Hayden Coffin.

An Artist's Model set the fashion of long runs at Daly's. During a period of 15 years, beginning with the production of *A Greek Slave* in 1898, there were only eleven new pieces there—*A Greek Slave* (352 performances); *San Toy* (768); *A Country Girl* (729); *The Cingalee* (363); *The Little Michus* (397); *Les Merveilleuses* (196); *The Merry Widow* (778); *The Dollar Princess* (428); *The Count of Luxembourg* (345); *Gipsy Love* (229); and *The Marriage Market* (423).

Big library deals were frequently negotiated at Daly's. When *The Count of Luxembourg* was produced in 1911, King George V. and Queen Mary were present at the first performance. The libraries, anticipating a prosperous run, made a record advance purchase. They bought from Edwardes all the seats he was willing to sell for each performance during the first six months of the run, and the deal ran into £50,000.

Night after night the cream of London's society met in the vestibule of Daly's; traffic as far as Piccadilly Circus was held up by streams of motors and carriages that dropped leaders of rank and fashion at

the theatre. Some of the most distinguished people in the land were among the regular visitors. Patrons were in the habit of seeing the same play night after night, week after week during the whole length of the run.

Here is a Daly patron's list of visits : *The Merry Widow*, 70 times ; *The Dollar Princess*, 200 times ; *A Waltz Dream*, 50 times ; *The Count of Luxembourg*, 35 times ; *Gipsy Love*, 100 times ; *The Maid of the Mountains*, 400 times.

King George V., when Prince of Wales, was instrumental in having Bertram Wallis chosen by George Edwardes to appear as the *Count of Luxembourg*, at Daly's. He was witnessing a performance of *The Balkan Princess* at the Prince of Wales Theatre in 1910, in which Bertram Wallis appeared as the Grand Duke Sergius, when he remarked to someone: "That man ought to be at Daly's." This reached Edwardes' ears, with the result that Wallis was selected to appear at that theatre.

Bertram Wallis was known as "the handsomest man in London." He was certainly magnificent in face and figure. He wore costume superbly and moved with grace. In musical comedy roles he had no equal at the time.

Wallis began life in a London office and made his first appearance in *Masks and Faces* at Folkestone in August, 1892. He started in small Shakespearean parts at the St. James's Theatre with Sir George Alexander, and later accepted an engagement from George Edwardes to play the chief parts on tour in *A Greek Slave* and *San Toy*. He appeared in numerous other musical plays including *A Country Girl*, *Three Little Maids*, *The King of Cadonia*, *The Balkan Princess*, *The Maid of the Mountains*, *A Southern Maid*, *Madame Pompadour* and *Paganini*.

In George Edwardes' days, Daly's Theatre employed about 200 people other than the artists and chorus. At pre-war rates, this staff involved a weekly expenditure of £1,600, added to which had to be found, say, another £1,500 for artistes' salaries. No wonder Edwardes said he made all his money in the provinces!

When James White took over, the payments yearly, including advertising and other expenses, ran to £200,000.

In the first year of its run the gross profits from *A Country Girl* reached £100,000, and in the second year £70,000. Edwardes admitted that he himself reaped a fortune of £100,000 from the play.

It was in this piece that Hayden Coffin scored a big hit.

The name "Coffin" horrified Edwardes, who described it as "a depressing and cemetery name." But its owner refused to change it.

On one occasion, when Coffin was at an "at home" at Edwardes' house in Regents Park, the maid, evidently nervous of the name, made the startling announcement: "Please Mr. Cab, your coffin is waiting for you!"

Hayden Coffin tells another good story in his interesting book of memoirs, concerning a pantomime offer he received from a certain manager through a well-known agent. Failing to lure the popular singer into a contract, the agent wired to the manager: "Impossible to engage Hayden Coffin, so have engaged Lockhart's Elephants."

Huntley Wright achieved high reputation for the subtlety and the artistry of his comedy in a very long run of Daly's musical comedies. He has, however, another claim to fame. As a young man, he not only told his father that the next theatrical development would be musical comedy, but, acting on his foresight, wrote the words and some of the music of a musical play and toured in it for three years, himself playing the principal comedy part.

This was after eight years in drama in his father's companies which he had joined when he left school. The title of Huntley Wright's pioneer piece was "*Merry Prince Hal*," with a musical Falstaff, Dame Quickly, etc. He never looked back, and only once did he revert to drama.

While playing in "*Merry Prince Hal*" at Whitehaven, Wright received a call from the Savoy Opera Company to come to London. He travelled all night in order to give D'Oyly Carte an audition on the Savoy Theatre stage in the morning. When he got there, the pianist did not know any of his songs, so he was forced to sing ballads unaccompanied. It was good enough.

Huntley Wright next toured South Africa as a member of George Edwardes' company. Edwardes was so satisfied that he cabled Wright a two years' contract which was signed at Johannesburg.

When he came home, he was offered the chinaman's part in *The Geisha*. Thus began Huntley Wright's unbroken association with Daly's extending over ten years, and in pieces that had an average of two years' run each. This record was achieved in spite of more than one inauspicious opening night.

Wright tells how *San Toy* opened when London was under a thick blanket of fog. Sidney Jones, the composer and conductor, was held up in his brougham, and this delayed the curtain for twenty minutes. It rose upon a half-empty house; the auditorium was as foggy as the streets; it was hardly possible to see those who were there. Yet *San Toy* ran for two years and three months.

The opening of *A Country Girl* was even less promising. On the

first night, Huntley Wright called on Evie Greene before the show to wish her luck. He found her on a sofa in her dressing room moaning with pain. Also, the staircase scene for the second act was not ready. Half-an-hour after the curtain should have risen the set was still not ready, and Miss Green was still in agony in her dressing room. George Edwardes, distraught, paced up and down exclaiming: "Someone bring me a broom; will someone bring me a broom."

The second act began about eleven. By this time the nerves of the audience, frayed by long waiting, broke in irritated and ironic noise. Grasping the situation, Wright seized his brother comedian, quaint Fred Kaye, of the peculiar walk, and rushed on the stage breaking in on one of Hayden Coffin's love scenes! They held the audience and averted pandemonium. Edwardes was so grateful that he sent Huntley Wright a beautiful ring and a letter of thanks. Even such an opening as this did not prevent the play running for over two years.

When war broke out in 1914, Wright had just signed a contract with Edwardes—or rather, with Edwardes' daughter, Mrs. Dorothy Sherbrooke, who had her father's power of attorney—to play in *Sybil*. When he came back from his Army service, the first offer Wright got was a contract to play the same part. It was from Robert Evett, who, acting for Edwardes' executors, knew nothing of the previous contract. So back Huntley Wright came to Daly's to start on another series of delightful comedy parts. The first time I saw him was at Ramsgate over forty years ago. He was touring in a burlesque, *Bonnie Boy Blue*, appearing in a dame part. The famous Sir Granville Bantock (then, of course, "Mr."), was the musical director of this touring company.

The theatre is a world of strange incidents. On one occasion during the run of *The Little Michus*, there was difficulty with the curtain which began slowly to descend before the act was finished. All efforts to stop its descent proved unavailing, and eventually the audience had to depart with money refunded. Often Daly's box-office was mistaken for a tube booking office, a post office, and even a pawnbroking establishment!

Daly's can claim to have received the first Marconigram from sea booking seats. The sender was F. G. Afalo, a well-known London banker and writer on natural history.

"Is Mr. Hayden Coffin playing at Daly's?" a lady once asked at the box-office. "Oh, no," replied the box-office clerk, "He's in 'Veronique' you know."

"Really," she exclaimed, "for the benefit of his health?"

Over fifty years ago Hayden Coffin took London by storm with "Queen of my Heart" in *Dorothy*, the music of which was composed by Alfred Cellier. A member of one of the early *Dorothy* casts, was a sister of George Bernard Shaw, the late Lucy Carr-Shaw, who appeared in the title role on tour and in London.

"Love could I only tell thee," an introduced song in *La Cigale* (the charming comic opera produced at the Lyric Theatre) sung by Hayden Coffin, did exactly what "Queen of my Heart" did for *Dorothy*, that is to say, put the show on its feet.

Hayden Coffin was born on April 22nd, 1862, in Manchester, but he was of American parentage. His father, C. R. Coffin, who graduated in dentistry at the University of Maine, U.S.A., was an enterprising man, and came over with his wife to introduce modern American dentistry to the rapidly growing Manchester of the 'sixties. Four years after Hayden Coffin was born, his parents took him back to America, but they stayed there only two years before returning this time to London. Coffin senior intended that Charles Hayden should be a doctor, and eventually he attended University College School, passing some of his medical examinations. But he had a good voice and good looks, and was soon constantly in demand as an amateur vocalist, actor and dancer. There was a struggle between his chosen profession and his obvious vocation for the stage. The issue was settled when he got a chance to appear as Captain John Smith in *Pocahontas* during the last week of its run at the Old Empire Theatre in January, 1885.

He played at the same theatre in March, 1885, in *The Lady of the Locket*. At the Avenue (now the Playhouse) he appeared in *Falka*, in 1885; at the Comedy in *The Lily of Leoville*, in the spring of 1886; as Harry Sherwood in *Dorothy*, which had a run of 934 performances. Then came parts in *Doris*, *The Red Hussar*, *Marjorie*, *Captain Therese*, *Maid Marian*, *La Cigale* and *Miss Decima*. These engagements took him up to 1892, when he went to America.

When he returned to England in 1893, Hayden Coffin was engaged by George Edwardes, first at the Prince of Wales, as Charles Goldfield in *A Gaiety Girl*. His big hits of this show were "Tommy Atkins," an introduced song composed by a Liverpool man, and "Sunshine Above." *A Gaiety Girl* was revived at Daly's in June, 1899.

From the Prince of Wales Theatre Coffin migrated to Daly's, and appeared there as Rudolph Blair, in *An Artist's Model*, (February 2nd, 1895); Reginald Fairfax in *The Geisha*, (April 25th, 1896); Diomed in *A Greek Slave*, (June 8th, 1898); Captain Preston in *San Toy*, (October 21st, 1899); Geoffrey Chaloner in *A Country Girl*, (January

18th, 1902); Harry Vereker in *The Cingalee*, (March 5th, 1904), and on December 23rd, 1916, as John Oxenham in *Young England*. He did not tour the provinces until 1906.

This fine artist and delightful singer, died on December 7th, 1935.

CHAPTER II.

THE GUV'NOR'S FORMULA.

CONTEMPORARY readers of Owen Hall's book of *An Artist's Model* will search in vain for a formula of success. The secret has vanished with the period it expressed, and with its interpreters.

Yet it does not demand an abnormally vivid imagination to see the piece coming to life under the production genius of George Edwardes and his brilliant cast on the stage of Daly's. Old playgoers will certainly recall Letty Lind's seductive singing of "The Gay Tom-Tit."

In the late Victorian era, Letty Lind, whether at the Gaiety or Daly's, cast a spell over audiences—a spell difficult to define precisely. To-day they call it glamour. Letty, a wonderful artiste in gesture and timing, had the theatre in her blood. Her four sisters—Lydia Flopp, Millie Hylton, Fanny Dango and Adelaide Astor (Mrs. George Grossmith)—all achieved success on the stage.

Born in Birmingham, she made her first appearance at six years of age as Cinderella at Hengler's Circus (now the London Paladium.) Incidentally, this was the first theatrical performance King George V. had ever seen. He was, of course, a small boy then, and wore a "fancy" sailor's suit.

After touring for some time, she went to the Gaiety before being engaged by George Edwardes for Daly's Theatre.

In a special way, Letty Lind embodied a George Edwardes conception of musical comedy appeal. She had *chic*; she was dainty, in the period meaning of that word; she achieved "beauty"—that will o' the wisp of the romantic producer. And, in spite of his prosaic exterior, the Guv'nor was always that. A Letty Lind entrance, at a moment when the house was convulsed by a comedian, never failed to hush the audience. To the dance music of Meyer Lutz or Sidney Jones, she would take them with her to a "world far from ours, where music and moonlight and feeling are one."

Theatrical pundits of the time regarded Letty Lind as the most engaging artiste of her genre since the incomparable Kate Vaughan. Whether on *Esmeralda* nights at the Old Gaiety, or on *Geisha* nights at Daly's, Letty was always gracefully masterful; and to a large extent she held sway in each of the George Edwardes periods, which centred on the personalities of Nellie Farren and Teddy Payne.

It is not generally known that Leslie Stuart's famous "Soldiers of the Queen" was sung in *An Artist's Model*.

Leslie Stuart could tell some funny stories of resuscitated songs. In 1881 he wrote one for an exhibition at Blackpool. Many years later, Hayden Coffin, in *An Artist's Model* at Daly's, sang a sarcastic ditty, about "The Soldiers of the Queen" who loved to stop at home and let the others go out and fight, to the same melody. But not so for Leslie. He never dropped a good tune, so up it bobbed serenely as the real "Soldiers of the Queen" during the South African war recruiting period, and took England by storm.

Leslie Stuart told the following story concerning the world famous tenor John McCormack, who, in his early struggling days after having denied himself much in order to advance his art, asked a London City man for an introduction to George Edwardes. He was prepared at that time to take even a small part in any of the musical plays Edwardes was producing. Finally, he received a postcard making an appointment to sing at an audition at Daly's Theatre, but the Guv'nor was not present and some underling was left to decide whether McCormack could sing or not. John heard nothing.

The City man was very angry with Edwardes for neglecting to give due attention to such a singer. The Guv'nor was apologetic and requested the City man to arrange an audition for McCormack with him personally. He was told that McCormack's agent could meet George Edwardes in a preliminary interview and the agent duly arrived.

Edwardes said that he was anxious to make amends for his crass omission, and asked the agent when he could hear McCormack sing, as he was prepared, if he thought him good enough, to give John the leading tenor part in one of his musical companies touring with a Daly's show. He was prepared to enter into a contract for three years at a rising scale of £10, £15 and £20 a week. The agent said that George Edwardes could hear McCormack sing that night at a public function close to Daly's Theatre. Edwardes asked the time and place, and the agent replied: "At Covent Garden with Madame Melba in *La Boheme*, and I am afraid that he could not accept less than £400 a week from Mr. Edwardes."

Auditions were held once a week at Daly's Theatre. At a time when musical comedy was sweeping the country, arousing stage ambitions in tens of thousands, the stage of Daly's on audition days presented a cross-section of a musical comedy-struck public. The average number attending an audition was 200. Genuine talent out of this number was rare. Many of the applicants were, of course, women, some of them middle-aged. Of a hundred good-looking

girls who presented themselves for engagements, perhaps 50 could sing passably, but not ten were fully equipped with singing ability, knowledge of dancing, and stage deportment.

Ladies came to Daly's Theatre for a voice trial from as far as Vienna, and were rejected as unsuitable.

Comedy and pathos were crowded into these auditions—and the tragedy of vain hope and unrealisable ambition. Fifty candidates for the chorus, each of them gripping a sheet of music, stretched in a long line from the wings up the long stairs to the street, all patiently waiting to sing a few bars of a much-rehearsed song. First would come a dainty weak-voiced little maid, aged 13, sent by a doting mother from a distant provincial town to become a chorus girl. Next, one who, in her fright, started to climb upon her chair in the middle of the stage when bidden to stand near it. Then an elderly woman who, on being turned down, begged for a chance to "do anything, even clean the floors" only "something to do to earn a living." I am reminded of Pelissier's laughable burlesque of a voice audition as presented by his "Follies," in which a theatre cleaner finds herself mixed up with the applicants and is asked to sing, and does.

But burlesque never quite hits off the deep humanity of these auditions. In a deplorable plight, one disappointed candidate asked the loan of a shilling for a meal before leaving. Strong, even moving and beautiful voices sometimes filled the dark theatre, but the music master generally shook his head. The good clothes of the candidates, which they did not wear with ease, their awkward gait, their self-conscious faces, told against them. One beautifully dressed girl who had come all the way from the Continent was too nervous even to stand away from the piano.

Again, a sweet-faced little girl from a London suburb with fair hair, simple gown, and the poise and gait of the girl who plays tennis, sang. She forgot the shopping bag in her hand, cast not a glance at the piano, and acquitted herself as if she were in front of a packed house. The accompanist let her sing to the end, clearly showing his delight. "She's a find," he remarked. The little fifteen-year-old girl 'find' walked away with her mother, glowing with a triumph which none of those to come could possibly eclipse. She had successfully taken the hardest step of all—the first.

Ignorance of the art of wearing clothes gracefully counts just as much as the lack of a good voice for the failure of many people who aspire to win fame and wealth on the stage. Inability merely to walk down a stage naturally also blasts the hopes of many theatrically ambitious young women who are endowed with good voices and beauty.

Such, at least, was Merlin Morgan's opinion. He was musical director at Daly's Theatre for many years and the composer of additional numbers for George Edwardes' Daly's musical plays. In his later period, Edwardes always sent for Merlin Morgan if he wanted a new number, and Morgan never failed to supply the right thing. Morgan, a real Bohemian, died in 1924.

George Edwardes was justly proud of his Daly's Theatre orchestra, of 40 picked musicians, which at different times had been under the direction of Barter Johns, Victor Champion, F. Ziegler, Arthur Wood, Alex. Stevens, Hamish MacCunn, Frank Tours, Ernest Ford, Harold Vicars, Merlin Morgan, Ernest Flecker and Leonard Hornsey.

As the Guv'nor graduated in the D'Oyly Carte school, it may not be out of place to relate another amusing audition story:

Francois Cellier, brother of Alfred Cellier, the composer of *Dorothy*, for many years personally tested all the voices at the Savoy Theatre, not only the candidates for principal roles but also the chorus. Michael Gunn, a cousin of George Edwardes, and an old business associate of D'Oyly Carte, was one day lunching at Romano's, when he sent a waiter to the Savoy Theatre to learn whether Mr. Carte was in. The waiter was gone a very long time. Carte, it appears, had pounced on the waiter at sight and, knowing the loquacity of the average choral candidate, sternly commanded him to sit down and not to talk. After a short time the man was ushered into Cellier's room, again told not to talk, but to sing up and down the scale, while Cellier played the piano. The astounded waiter obeyed. He was then told to sing any song he knew, and a few minutes later found himself outside the theatre never having had a chance of delivering Mr. Gunn's message, but the proud possessor of a certificate declaring that he was qualified as a baritone in the chorus of D'Oyly Carte's No. 1 Company in the provinces!

Talent was always coming to the front from the big school at Daly's. Among the stars-to-be who graduated in the chorus under George Edwardes—were Mabel Russell, Mabel Green, Gladys Cooper, Winifred Barnes, Maidie Andrews, Madeline Seymour, Phyllis le Grand, Daisie Irving, Effie Mann, Isobel Elsom and very many others.

Mrs. Field, who was Wardrobe Mistress for George Edwardes at Daly's Theatre for 25 years, said in 1932 that modern chorus girls are not a patch on the girls she knew in the old George Edwardes days. Looking back on a wonderful panorama of theatre history, she remarked that girls in the chorus now are not so attractive as the show girls, the singers and the dancers of the old days. She asked plaintively where to-day can you find anywhere the equal of an Olive

Dame Marie Tempest who in May, 1935, completed her fiftieth year on the stage, wrote: "I know of no greater pleasure than that of visiting an old theatrical firm, say, of costumiers, and gossiping with the old hands, who recall the glories of the George Edwardes days—and the frocks they made for me when I played in *The Geisha* or *An Artist's Model* or later in *Becky Sharp* or *Peg Woffington*. How their eyes light up and how excited they get over the joys and tribulations of these first nights of twenty, thirty, forty years ago!"

Mrs. Field, who in later years was Drury Lane's Wardrobe Mistress, made all the costumes for the first production of *The Merry Widow*—including Lily Elsie's—in 1907, and she saw the foundation stone of Daly's Theatre laid. She made all the dresses for Dame Marie Tempest, Evie Greene and many other famous stars when she was at Daly's.

In eight hectic weeks Mrs. Field made 450 costumes and 300 hats for the *Cavalcade* production at Drury Lane. In 1914 she embarked on a business venture in Canada, which unfortunately failed. She lost everything and had to sell the diamond brooch Mr. Edwardes gave her as a memento of her long service with him. Had it not been for the great kindness and help of one of her nephews, Nelson Keys, she would never have been able to come home. Sir Alfred Butt (then "Mr.") wanted a wardrobe mistress for the Palace, and when Nelson Keys mentioned his aunt's name, Sir Alfred cabled her to come back.

One of Mrs. Field's early memories of Nelson Keys' imitative ability was a Christmas party many years ago when he borrowed a screen from her bedroom behind which he did a one-man imitation of Sousa's Band.

She described this private performance to George Edwardes, and Nelson Keys obtained an engagement in the chorus of the No. 1 touring company of the popular Gaiety musical play *The Orchid*. He also understudied the "Teddy Payne" part, which was played on tour by George Gregory. This was in 1904. Nelson Keys, however, soon climbed to stardom.

Before George Edwardes took over from Augustin Daly he had conceived musical comedy as a new theatre form. There was no question of "inventing" it. Musical comedy had origins far back in theatrical history, but George Edwardes organised its scattered elements and shaped them into form. He is, therefore, the father of musical comedy in this country.

For years the idea had been germinating in his mind. It

was in 1890, after he had produced *Carmen-up-to-Data* at the Shakespeare Theatre, Liverpool, that he broached the idea in an all-night conversation with George R. Sims at the North Western Hotel. They sat well into the small hours, while the Guv'nor outlined his conception of a new type of musical play.

He insisted that comedy with original music and a chorus would be the best card for him to play. He thought the old fashioned Gaiety burlesque dead. What the public wanted was a comedy plot with a bright musical setting and plenty of pretty girls. How right he was was proved by a series of successes unprecedented in the history of the modern stage.

While there were transitional essays—part of the process of trial and error—musical comedy as a new theatre form was born in George Edwardes' production of *In Town* at the Prince of Wales Theatre in 1892. True, this piece was a mere shadow of the production, casting and musical triumphs to come; but it was very definitely a portent. The cast of *In Town* included Arthur Roberts, one of the greatest comedians of his own or any other time.

There was much in the George Edwardes brand of musical comedy that appealed to the cultivated eye and ear. The stage pictures were brilliant, conceived and arranged with skill and artistic feeling. Undoubtedly they had much to do with the success of *The Geisha* and *San Toy*. The names of the George Edwardes stars attest his belief in basing a production on the finest talent available. On the musical side the fluent melodies of such composers as Sidney Jones, Paul Rubens, Ivan Caryll and Lionel Monckton stamped the production with art.

But change—variety—is the life of the theatre. In search of it Edwardes went to Germany. The result was the "importation" of *The Merry Widow*, which led to the greater musical development in the harmonic and orchestral side of musical comedy.

The Girl from Kay's was to have been titled *The Girl from Jay's*; but the proprietors of the famous firm of that name raised objections. The cast included players of the calibre of Louis Bradfield, Kate Cutler, and Willie Edonin. At the end of a good run it showed a deficit of about £2,000; but the tours in the country and abroad covered all the losses and added a big parcel of profit. The public paid over £5,000,000 to see *The Geisha* and *San Toy*, and there is no doubt that the gross receipts of *The Merry Widow*, described as the luckiest light opera that has ever been produced, ran into many millions sterling.

Before the curtain rose, *The Lady Dandies* (*Les Merveilleuses*),

which had quite a good run at Daly's Theatre, cost £10,000, and although it ran for a long time to first-rate business, the balance was on the wrong side of the ledger over the London production.

Musical comedy became a theatrical Klondike for Edwardes' collaborators. Authors, composers and artists amassed fortunes; scene painters rocketed to an hitherto undreamed-of prosperity; costumiers, property makers and printers all shared in the lucky strike. The wealth so earned was distributed over every kind of business that impinged on the theatre. These were the dream days of the cabbies and florists, who were kept busy by stage-struck, wealthy young men about town who haunted Daly's stage door in the hope of inducing a favourite to take lunch or supper with them, or even to earn a smile. Restaurants boomed, and wherever the stars lunched or supped, there the smart crowd, with money to burn, was to be found.

The manager was the only one who took risks. He could seldom "get out" in the big way from London productions; to a large extent he depended on returns from the provinces and abroad.

The Guv'nor spent like a Croesus. Only the best was good enough for him, and to get the best he would pay through the ears and eyes, as well as the nose if need be. He seldom haggled about terms. To him money was a means to an end—success; but he spent so much on achieving it that he took some dizzy risks. At Daly's he had one of the most expensive orchestras in Europe, yet it was merely one item in a financial total that left cautious business men bewildered.

He did not consider he was doing moderately good business at Daly's unless his company was playing to £2,000 a week; even then, weeks elapsed before production expenses were covered. And these expenses, it must be remembered, are quite apart from the so-called "working expenses" of a theatre—apart, in other words, from the question of rent and taxes and the salary paid to the large army of workers engaged—the actors, actresses, authors, composers, lyric-writers, orchestra, chorus, teachers engaged to train them in singing and dancing, managers, clerks, scene-shifters, "lighting men," dressers, wardrobe mistresses, programme sellers, supers, commissionaires, cleaners,—all, in fact, down to the professional rat-catcher, who does a flourishing trade in some leading London theatres. Edwardes once paid £300 for a settee for the stage, and in 1908 he handed a cheque for £10,000 to a firm of dressmakers.

Edwardes' plan of production was interesting. In the old days one man wrote the entire libretto and another man composed the music.

This simplified matters. Nowadays, a play is brought to a manager, who says he does not like this, and would rather cut out that. The production is discussed from all aspects for months, and then, after the ground has been cleared, so to speak, the author sits down to write it. Even after that it is re-arranged and re-modelled till the original is hardly recognisable. The Guv'nor, however, tried to produce what he had in mind, but sometimes when he saw the finished article on the stage, it failed to realise what he had set out to achieve. Such mistakes cost him thousands of pounds.

Edwardes was always able to hold his own against the most exacting stars. Here is a story concerning one of his leading ladies. At a final rehearsal she was evidently not satisfied. "Can I have a word with you, Mr. Edwardes?" she called out across the stage.

"Well, what is it, my dear?"

"I just want this altered. I don't like it at all. If I come on like this I shan't get a reception."

"Oh!" he flashed, "that will be all right, my dear. It is not your reception when you come on that I want; it is your reception when you go off."

This lady's great talents were not, however, able to secure that on the first night. The pit and the gallery started booing. Edwardes came on the stage, but he could not get a hearing for some time. At last he got a word in. Lifting up both arms to the gallery he exclaimed in tones of mock surprise:

"What! don't you like it?"

Cries of "No, we don't." But they stopped booing.

"Very well, come back in six weeks' time, and I promise you that you shall like it."

And they did come back not only for six weeks, but for a year.

At the back of Daly's Theatre Edwardes had perhaps the finest and best arranged suite of offices to be found in any London theatre. He spent most of his time there, going out only for dinner and returning after an hour or two. Caller after caller was shown into his private sanctuary. Hundreds never got as far as that. He could not see everybody, and many were time-wasters.

"If some of them only knew how hard I have to work," he once said, as he settled himself down comfortably in an armchair, "they would not change places."

He did a tremendous amount of work and enjoyed himself when he relaxed. He was an unusual man—something of a philosopher, a profound student and judge of human nature, an administrator of wonderful tact and judgment, a masterful man of affairs. He loved

to visit Ogbourne to see his race-horses. He was fond of golf. But the Spartan strain ran ail through him. He spent more time at his office than any other manager in London; he ate plenty of fruit, drank nothing but Malvern water, smoked very little. Malvern water carries a George Edwardes story. One curious side to his character was an odd, child-like fancy of crediting most people with large incomes. Once, when out with a friend, he stopped a poor old man who was picking weeds by the roadside.

"What are you doing?" asked Edwardes.

"I am going to make these weeds into a lotion for my sore arms," replied the old man.

"Good heavens, man, why don't you drink Malvern water? Of course you mustn't touch wine—a glass or two of champagne wouldn't hurt you—but Malvern water is just the thing for you."

"How on earth can this poor old fellow afford Malvern water?" asked Edwardes' companion.

Then the Guv'nor seemed to realise the position and he laughingly gave the old man £2, warning, "Mind you get that water."

He trained several fine lieutenants to assist him at Daly's. Miss Emilie Reid, a remarkable business woman, was his right-hand for many years. She retired from her post before he died, and is now living, I believe, in Whitley Bay, near Newcastle-on-Tyne. She always contracted very important business for Edwardes. The late Charles Cannon took over her duties. He began at Daly's as an office boy. After Edwardes' death he took up a very important post at Drury Lane under Sir Alfred Butt. Fred. King was assistant manager at Daly's for many years, and Herbert St. John managed the theatre for the last seven years of its existence.

Between June 27, 1893, when Daly's was opened, and September 25, 1937, when it was handed over to demolition men to make way for a cinema, nearly every form of theatrical entertainment had been presented there. Across its stage had passed Shakespearean tragedy, and pantomime; French farce and non-stop variety; comic and grand opera. But the George Edwardes period of musical comedy, which dominated the panorama, left behind its richest memories.

Edwardes' collaborators who survived him, often returned in memory to the great days of Daly's to re-live its triumphs and to draw comparisons between the Edwardes production and those of the most recent theatre. Their views are always interesting.

J. Garrett Todd, manager of Daly's Theatre, who retired in January, 1928, after having held the position for many years, thought that the

below
MABEL RUSSELL



above
LETTY LIND
as Molly Seamore in
The Geisha.

LAURI DE FRECE
as Kajetan in
Gipsy Love.



right
HARRY WELCHMAN
in *The Street Singer*.



HAYDEN COFFIN
as Reginald Fairfax in
The Geisha.



scarcity of young actresses for musical comedy was partly due to the fact that they do not bother to work. Many of them, he said, are rather like spoiled children; but that may not be altogether their fault. Managers are partly to blame.

To mark the retirement of Garrett Todd, in 1928, all who had acted at Daly's Theatre during this century were invited to a performance of *Lilac Time*. It was an unforgettable reunion. During the intervals the orchestra played selections from famous musical plays produced at Daly's in the past, and after the performance the guests were entertained on the stage. Among them were Lily Elsie, Mabel Russell, Jose Collins, Denise Orme, Mrs. George Edwardes, and Huntley Wright.

Garrett Todd started his stage career as assistant stage manager at Daly's during the run of *San Toy*. In his opinion, the best production at that theatre was *The Merry Widow*, and he considered Huntley Wright was the most inventive comedian in his experience there, with George Graves second.

A popular member of the staff at Daly's Theatre was H. W. Anderson, who was in charge of the box-office. He was with Edwardes for over thirty years. Anderson was very popular with the patrons, and had an intimate knowledge of their seating requirements. Mrs. Carrington, the housekeeper, was with George Edwardes when he took over Daly's and remained there until the end of the theatre's career—that is, for 42 years. Many other members of the staff had 30 years' service.

The first manager under George Edwardes was George Edwards, Minor, the word "minor" being added to his name so as not to confuse him with the chief.

George Edwards, Minor, was succeeded by T. J. Courtly, and on Courtly's joining Sir Alfred Butt as manager of the Comedy Theatre in 1914, Arthur Aldin, late of the old Empire, Leicester Square, took sole control of Daly's. Eventually Cecil Paget, originally manager of the Crown Theatre, Peckham, succeeded.

CHAPTER III.

THE GUV'NOR AT WORK—AND PLAY.

COOKS declare that more culinary art goes to the making of a soufflé than is required for the preparation of a solid joint. This is generally true of theatrical entertainment.

Musical comedy, the soufflé of theatrical art, involved an enormous expenditure of skill, time and money. To provide audiences with fare light enough to be taken without effort means hard, unremitting work for the management. At least, it was also so at Daly's which established musical comedy as an enduring favourite with the public.

Audiences, in the hours of effortless enjoyment, give little thought to the problems that lie behind the wit of the book, the magic of the music, the glitter of the dresses. All this is accepted in the same way as a meal in a restaurant. If the food is good and well served, they go away satisfied and recommend their friends. But good or bad, patrons do not concern themselves with the processes of preparation.

The analogy may not be exact, but it will satisfy those who have worked behind the scenes of musical comedy. The theatre knows no more arduous, exhausting and expensive work. Adequate preparation demands the last ounce from all concerned; but it offers great opportunities for the development of skill and the exercise of that undefinable quality called flair.

Consider some of the men who were associated with the control of the stage at Daly's; their names are now part of theatrical history, for they all of them contributed something to the development of theatrical art. Among them were Brian England, Standley Wade, Reginald Highley, Gerald James, E. B. Norman and Willie Warde. Oscar Asche. Sir Seymour Hicks, Robert Courtneidge, J. A. E. Malone, F. J. Blackman and Edward Royce were producers.

At the peak of his success, George Edwardes was justly considered to be the greatest musical comedy manager and producer of his time. To see him work was an unforgettable experience. Speed was the mark of his genius. He finished his business in remarkably quick time. In one short day he would listen to the music and lyrics of a new number and suggest changes; improve the colour scheme of a famous designer's sketches for costumes; suggest telling details in a scenic artist's model for a big new scene; hear part of a new play;

interview personally dozens of artists for present or future engagements ; and, finally, discuss with his staff important work that would take months to complete and cost thousands of pounds. At rehearsals, no weakness in play or music escaped his lightning criticism. He had a rapier eye for dullness. Suggested improvements came in a flash in clear, exact words, and the next rehearsal generally proved him right.

He even pepped-up the dances. On one occasion, Willie Warde, a great dancing master, was rehearsing a new number, a duet with a delightful refrain and dancing exit. Evidently critical of the performance, George Edwardes stepped on the stage. Holding his coat tails spread out like a skirt, and to the music of the full Daly's orchestra, this big man lightly tripped the measure himself to show how he thought the dance should end. The number, and especially the dance, went over big that night.

The Guv'nor's many great successes were sometimes attributed to good luck, but actually they were the result of much thought, good judgment, a genius for feeling the pulse of the public, and hitting the bull's eye of popular taste. He never worked long enough at rehearsals to get "stale" over a new musical show. Then a few days later he brought fresh mind to bear on the production. His method was to place himself in the position of the playgoing public and look at things from the point of view of the audience, not from that of the actors. He seldom saw any of his productions right through after the first night. Only occasionally he went into the theatre to watch important parts of the play, or to "taste" new songs or dances, for he was constantly adding to his pieces. If there was the slightest falling off, or flagging, it was at once remedied.

Edwardes was a great believer in youth and good looks in both sexes, and even those who played the older parts in his company were rarely middle-aged. At one time he had under his management six very charming little girls who had been especially selected nine months before for their dancing, singing, acting, good looks and particularly for their youth. On one occasion, Edwardes in the dress circle at Daly's was gazing at the girls through his opera glasses. "Look at those girls," he said to his stage manager, who was with him. "What's the matter with them?" his stage manager replied. "Can't you see how old they're getting," was Edwardes' reply.

When he attended a race meeting near a town where one of his touring companies was playing, he occasionally invited a small party to meet him at the races.

On one of these occasions, a sudden call to London prevented him

from meeting his guests ; so he deputed some racing friends to entertain them. They had a good time, but they missed The Guv'nor. One of the party, a charming girl full of fun, and a leading lady with a big reputation among provincial audiences, wrote him a note regretting his absence and enclosing a little bill, with items set out like a house agent's list of dilapidations, with a small charge against each. It went something like this :

Disappointment.

Damage to new hat through rain.

Money lost betting, which might have been " put on " for her.

Extra charge for damaged feelings.

This " bill " so amused Edwardes that he sent the lady a cheque for the amount.

He always kept a big string of race horses, and it was his delight to provide the " profession " with a winner or two on Saturday afternoons.

The most famous horse to carry Edwardes' colours was Santoi, which won the Ascot Gold Cup and the Jubilee Handicap at Kempton in 1901, and was later a success at the stud. Yentoi, one of his sons, won the Cesarewitch in 1908 for Lady de Bathe (Lily Langtry)—naturally a popular win in the theatrical world. Other well-known horses owned by Edwardes were Drinmore and Santeve ; the latter won the Liverpool Cup in 1908 and again in the following year.

The Guv'nor loved games and sports—mostly costly ones ; golf, motoring, horse-racing, bridge, shooting and chess were his favourites ; but literally all games interested him. If he saw a cricket match on a village green, he would stop the whole of the afternoon to watch it. A country race meeting in Ireland would provide him with amusing stories and quips for months. His love of horse-racing baffles description. The stable at Ogbourne, where he owned some 3,000 or 4,000 acres as well as a village, was one of the largest in England. He had a stud-farm in the south of Ireland, and often travelled there over-night from London, returning the following night, and leaving the next morning for Paris, Berlin or Vienna.

The Guv'nor could pick " winners " when it came to engaging staff.

J. A. E. Malone, Edwardes' right hand man as a producer for many years at Daly's was a typical example. Malone originally produced *The Merry Widow* at Daly's Theatre, and he was responsible for a long line of George Edwardes' successes. The son of a well-known officer in the Enniskillens, Malone was intended for the medical profession and attended Edinburgh University for two years. Then

trouble arose in Rhodesia and young Malone, among the first to volunteer, enrolled in Methuen's Horse. After serving in Africa he returned to England and took to the stage, first appearing as an actor. His talent, however, was found to be in the direction of stage management. He became resident at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool, where for several years he acted as producer of the pantomimes for which that house was so justly noted. While there, George Edwardes met him and seeing at once that "Pat" Malone was his man, offered him the post of stage manager at the old Gaiety. This post eventually led to that of stage director at Daly's Theatre.

Such men as Malone, and those mentioned earlier in connection with control of Daly's stage, kept up the essential "tone" of successful musical comedy. Contrary to some aspects of the prevailing taste, it was always "clean" entertainment, appealing to all classes, even the most strait-laced. Consequently, every success at Daly's was assured of the widest possible patronage in a social sense.

Royalty frequently visited Daly's. The theatre had a special private entrance from the street direct to the Royal Box, and a handsome private suite adjoining it. I was privileged to use this suite as a temporary office when I first went to Daly's in charge of the Press Department.

King Edward VII. was present at the opening performance of *The Cingalee* on March 5, 1904. He saw *The Merry Widow* at Daly's many times. On one occasion, sitting in the Royal Box with Edwardes, His Majesty drew the latter's attention to a certain lady in the back row of the chorus, suggesting that she ought to be promoted to the front row on account of her exceptional beauty. This was done, and the lady in question eventually became one of Edwardes' leading ladies.

King Edward was much attracted by the Guv'nor, and liked to talk to him. They often lunched together when they met on the Continent. The King's pleasant, easy ways and happy laughter, his interests in theatre and horses appealed to George Edwardes.

The quieter side of the Guv'nor's character was shown in his love for chess. It acted on his highly-strung mind like a sedative. After some hair-raising financial speculation, he would settle down to a game of chess with friends and appear to cast aside all outside harassments. But even here his competitive nature would gradually assert itself, and he would concentrate for hours on the job of winning.

Of a host of friends he held few in greater esteem than Walter Pallant, who before he became a rich man and chairman of the Gaiety, was too poor to afford anything grander than a top-floor bedroom in a Bloomsbury apartment house inhabited by unmarried City clerks.

One night Pallant brought a poor devil of a down-and-out upstairs to give him an old coat. The man refused to allow his benefactor to trudge down the stairs to see him out. On the way down he took the pair of boots he saw outside each bedroom door, and the next morning there was pandemonium in the apartment-house, and some City offices were short of a clerk!

CHAPTER IV.

SUCCESS OF "THE GEISHA."

IT is now time to ring up the curtain on that delightful musical play *The Geisha* which was first produced at Daly's Theatre on April 25, 1896, and ran for 760 performances. Revived in June, 1906, and June, 1931, it was first broadcast by the B.B.C. in 1935, and again in January, 1938. Huntley Wright appeared in both revivals in his original part, Wun-Hi, Chinese proprietor of the Tea House. The original cast at Daly's, in addition to Huntley Wright, included Harry Monkhouse, (Marquis Imari), Hayden Coffin, (Lieutenant Reginald Fairfax), W. Louis Bradfield, (Lieutenant Cunningham), William Philp, (Captain Katana), Juliette Nesville, (Juliette), Letty Lind, (Molly Seamore), and Marie Tempest, (O. Mimosa San).

Owen Hall, the author, studied Japanese life and character in order to make the story accurate in fact and atmosphere. The Japanese element of the piece is correctly rendered. Several Japanese attended the rehearsals to advise and, allowing a dramatic licence, the plot of *The Geisha* is by no means improbable. The "Japanning" of the piece was entrusted to Arthur Diosy, founder and vice-chairman of the Japan Society, to ensure exactitude of detail. Here and there, of course, alterations had to be made in order to obtain stage effects.

In writing *The Geisha*, Owen Hall aimed at artistic value. Laughs were not enough; that kind of writing came easy to him. The use of the word 'damn' will get a certain laugh from the pit, so will the imaginary dropping of a weight on a gouty foot, so will a stumble on the stairs when the low comedian makes his exit. I am quoting Owen Hall, who was interviewed shortly after the first performance of *The Geisha*. He considered that people were getting tired of the old type burlesque entertainment, and in writing *The Geisha* he tried to break new ground. People, he said, were accustomed to musical plays being chipped and hacked about until whatever story the piece originally had, disappeared. In a piece like *The Geisha*, dialogue is not the main consideration for many reasons. First, the piece must not run for more than three hours. Twenty minutes of that time are occupied by the waits between the acts, which leaves two hours and forty minutes for the actual playing. Divide this between the author and the composer, and it can be seen that the plot of a musical play must be told in one hour and twenty minutes—rather less than

half the time usually allotted to the writer of a three-act comedy. And there must be, according to Owen Hall, as many characters in a musical play as in a drama. He summed up : " I don't see why a play shouldn't be just as rational with music as without, and in time I see no reason why a musical play shouldn't be as sound from the literary point of view as *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*. There are, of course, plenty of musical plays, a play with music as they are sometimes labelled, meritorious from a literary point of view." Incidentally, Owen Hall, whose real name was 'Jimmy' Davies, has two brilliant nephews, Ronald and Gilbert Frankau.

Harry Greenbank was responsible for the lyrics of *The Geisha*. The writing of a lyric, Greenbank has said, came fairly easily to him. He used to sit down every evening after dinner with a blank sheet of paper in front of him, without waiting for a mood. He went straight ahead in the manner of a contemporary surrealist. Sometimes a lyric came very quickly. Sometimes it would bother him for days, especially the lyric of a love-song. The famous " Polly Winked her Eye " song, written at Letty Lind's request, followed the same lines as her " Tom-Tit " number in *An Artist's Model*. Greenbank's favourite type of lyric told a story.

The extraordinary amount of realism which Letty Lind managed to infuse into these two songs can be explained. She studied the part from life, with a parrot in front of her. She confessed to being extremely fond of birds.

" To me," she said, " they are always amusing companions, and I can sit for hours and watch a bird in a cage." In the *Geisha* days, of course, that interesting little bird the budgerigar was unknown. But everything was "*Geisha*" at the time—*Geisha* hats, *Geisha* ties ; the shops were full of goods called after the piece.

Dame Marie Tempest liked being a Japanese *Geisha*. " Anything for a change," she once said.

She was of the opinion that *The Geisha* was one more proof of George Edwardes' wonderful foresight in suiting the public taste at the right time. *The Geisha* is certainly delightful—book, music, scenery ; but it is difficult for the present generation to recall its magical appeal.

Dame Marie, a perfect O Mimosa San, did not find Japanese dress uncomfortable, and she was very well suited with the songs composed by Sidney Jones, who thought " The Amorous Goldfish," sung by Marie Tempest, the best song he ever wrote.

In an interview Jones was asked if he had been to Japan to get inspiration.

“No,” he replied, “Japanese music, pure and simple would not be quite acceptable to a British audience.”

One number, “Chon-Kina” sung by Letty Lind is pure Japanese, but Jones had to adapt it slightly. As sung in Japan it sounded very like the droning of bagpipes.

Jones was born in Leeds and his best-known works are: *The Geisha*, *A Gaiety Girl*, *An Artist's Model*, *A Greek Slave*, *San Toy*, *My Lady Molly*, and *The King of Cadonia*. He was appointed musical director at the London Empire in 1905 and composed several ballets for that house, notably *The Bugle Call* and *Cinderella*.

One of the big successes of *The Geisha* was scored by Huntley Wright with his quaint Chinese song and dance. It will probably come as a surprise to most people that he never took a dancing lesson in his life. Dancing came naturally to him, scion of an old theatrical family. His father, Fred Wright, lived to a great age. His brother, Fred Wright, Junior, was a very gifted comedian. Fred played his brother's part in *The Geisha* on tour. Huntley's two sisters, Haidee and Marie, also won fame on the stage. Another brother, Bertie, with a style similar to his brothers', toured in the George Edwardes' companies.

Huntley Wright was asked if he did the same dance every night in *The Geisha*. He replied that he changed it a little at times. He acquired his knowledge of China from books. When his part in *The Geisha* was handed to him, he studied it, liked it, and determined to squeeze the last drop of juice out of it. He read a lot of books on Chinese dancing, and discovered that the Chinese very seldom danced at all!

To Willie Warde belonged the credit of inventing *The Geisha* dances. Warde had the reputation of being capable of inventing any kind of dance conceivable. He acquired some of his knowledge of Japanese dancing at the Japanese Exhibition village in London, which he visited many times. Warde's dances were an adaptation of the real thing, retaining much of the authentic Japanese gliding movement.

Warde's father was a dancer, and his mother was in the circus business. Willie made his first appearance on the stage in 1859 as a child in arms in *Young and Old Stagers*, and his first hit was as Harlequin at the Old Standard Theatre, Bishopsgate. He was the original Harlequin in Barrie's delightful one-act play, *Pantaloone*, first produced at the Duke of York's Theatre in 1905.

Brian England, who was stage manager for the original production of *The Geisha*, was an acknowledged authority on all subjects connected

with the stage. He had done everything and had travelled everywhere—including Japan. Formerly an officer in the Navy, he had several spells of gold-digging, and many years experience of stage work, including seven years devoted to Shakespearean acting.

On the anniversary performance of *The Geisha*, George Edwardes presented a Birthday Book to each member of the audience, containing illustrations of the artists, and quotations for each day from *A Gaiety Girl*, *An Artist's Model* and *The Geisha*. At the end of *The Geisha's* long run at Daly's, all the members of the company inscribed their names on a scroll of parchment, which was presented to George Edwardes. It is now in the possession of A. Charles Knight, J.P.

George Edwardes' first experience of presenting souvenirs to members of the audience was rather tragic. It happened during the run of *Miss Esmeralda*, at the Old Gaiety Theatre in 1887. The souvenirs were in the form of small but dainty tambourines, which were given away to a packed house. When, in response to a 'call,' George Edwardes stepped before the curtain glowing and gratified, he was met with a shower of tambourines and cries of "We came for a souvenir, not for these penny things."

Describing the scene, the Guv'nor said: "I had the quickest cool-off on record, but I learned something about souvenirs." Hence the beautiful *Geisha* mementos.

CHAPTER V.

FIFTY YEARS A LEADING LADY.

IN passing the great George Edwardes period of Daly's under review one hardly notices the rise of Dame Marie Tempest to stardom. It seems that she always was a star, since it is difficult to think of her in any lesser position.

For 50 years, indeed, Dame Marie's place in the theatrical firmament has been assured by a genius of unique range and depth. It was always there, stamping every performance with the sign-manual of a clear, significant and intensely personal art.

Dame Marie could look back on a contribution to the Theatre unrivalled in its history. Hers is one of the great names of the stage, a name to be considered solely with those of Garrick, Mrs. Siddons, Kean, Ellen Terry and Sir Henry Irving, all of whom, like Dame Marie, created something personal which raised the art of acting above dead formulæ.

It would have been strange, indeed, if this most accomplished artiste, whose art was an epitome of her time, had not started at Daly's. For her zestful comedy, ranging from the romantic to the acidulated, expressed the whole gamut of later Victorian and the Edwardian theatrical styles.

But her restless genius, faceted like a cut diamond, could never say after success in one genre had been achieved: "This is enough. This is where I stop. This is my formula."

So from the great period of Daly's, Dame Marie moved into the present age, reflecting every change of fashion and imposing her artistic will and creative power on practically every kind of theatrical material.

She was first seen on the stage on May 30, 1885, as Fiametta in the comic opera *Boccaccio* at the Comedy Theatre, London. Between then and the all-star matinee given to celebrate Dame Marie's jubilee on the stage at Drury Lane Theatre, on May 28, 1935—what proud memories!

Fifty years a leading lady! For, whatever the part, Dame Marie never was anything but a leading lady. That position was hers by natural right of a mastery of every technical detail of the actor's art plus a matchless creative spirit.

The Daily Telegraph organised the jubilee celebration so that Britain could have an opportunity of paying homage to Dame Marie's art.

All the world was in the Drury Lane Theatre. King George V. and Queen Mary, with Princess Victoria, were present. More than 200 well-known actors and actresses took part. Every seat in the theatre was filled. In the audience were hundreds who remembered Dame Marie's early performances in *A Greek Slave*, *The Geisha* and *San Toy*, which confirmed the first impressions that she was a comedienne of genius.

Dame Marie, who appeared in scenes from two of her most famous parts in *The Marriage of Kitty*, as the dying Empress in *Little Catherine*, and in a masque specially written for the occasion by John Drinkwater, received a series of remarkable ovations. The proceeds of the matinee, approximately £5,000, were devoted, at Dame Marie's own wish, to the foundation of a Marie Tempest ward at St. George's Hospital for actors and actresses.

What did Mr. Gladstone say in 1881? Anyhow, Mr. Gladstone, who was a particular friend of the then Miss Tempest's grandmother, told her to think twice before deciding to take up a theatrical career. She did not think twice, but just did as her ardent spirit prompted—and went on the stage. She was brought up by her grandmother, who lived in Whitehall Gardens. Her education was completed in Belgium and Paris, and she spoke French perfectly. Shortly after her grandmother died, she began her career as an entertainer at City dinners for one guinea an evening.

Marie Tempest appeared in various musical plays from 1885 to 1899, and visited America in 1890. Her chief successes in that class of entertainment were in *Dorothy*, *Doris*, *The Red Hussar*, *An Artist's Model*, *The Geisha*, *A Greek Slave* and *San Toy*, in which latter piece she was cast for the title role; but when she learned that she would have to appear in short pants (or "shorts" as they are called now), which have always been considered necessary to the part, she struck, and there was trouble. The newspapers took up the controversy which raged for several days. Other times other manners. In these days "San Toys" arouse no comment.

Yet it was the same Marie Tempest who hit back at the Bishop of London's protest in 1935 against the scantiness of stage costumes. In a letter to *The Times* she wrote: "I do protest strongly at any attempt to revive the activities of the prudens on the prowl, the spying of the Stigginses and the chortling of the Chadbands. If an ankle in the 'nineties thrilled one as even the most modest can recall, what must be a whole leg do in 1935? Well, the answer is that there is no thrill at all, and we are going back to provocative ankle of the period of purity."

I should say Dame Marie's three masterpieces were in *The Marriage of Kitty*, produced in 1902, *Becky Sharp*, produced in 1901, and *The First Mrs. Fraser*, by St. John Ervine, produced in 1929, which ran throughout 1930, for a total of 632 performances.

Marie Tempest believed that audiences often forget the influence they themselves exert on the players. That is the meaning of the phrase, "Audiences get what they deserve." A dull, apathetic, irresponsible audience will get a dull, lifeless performance. An eager, generous, responsive one will obtain its reward in drawing from the players the very best that it is in them to give.

Marie Tempest had the supreme gift of laughter and tears. In the Restoration Theatre she would have been magnificent. She might have written over the portals of her dressing-room, "Points made here : all business skilfully executed." For that is the type of actress she was. Her emotions, like her gowns, fitted to perfection. By one inarticulate noise in her throat—a stifled cry or smothered gurgle—she could express more than most actresses with the aid of the most eloquent language. Singing, she said, is better for a woman than golf.

CHAPTER VI.

SOME GREAT CONTEMPORARIES.

A FLASHBACK over Dame Marie's career inevitably brings some of her Daly's contemporaries into focus. There was, for instance, W. Louis Bradfield, "Braddy" to his intimates, the accomplished actor-vocalist, who appeared with Dame Marie in the part of Lieutenant Cunningham in *The Geisha*. Bradfield made his first appearance on the stage at the Theatre Royal, Nottingham, in 1889-90 in the pantomime *Sinbad the Sailor*. He played "Shipwreckers," the "bad man" of the piece, and sang "Spliced," and "The Longshoreman." This first essay might have been his last, for a wire broke and he fell fifteen feet, but, luckily, he sustained nothing worse than a bruised heel. After this, he was marked out for early promotion to London's West End stage. Before reaching there, however, he played the Fred Leslie part on tour in *Cinder Ellen*, and *Ruy Blas*.

These engagements were followed by a long association with *In Town* and *A Gaiety Girl*, in which he toured the world in 1894 and 1895, returning to England to play at Daly's Theatre in *An Artist's Model* and *The Geisha*. Louis Bradfield gained a host of admirers all over the country. He had many adventures while travelling with the Gaiety Company in Australia, but his most unpleasant experience was at Dundee, when, owing to the carelessness of a stage hand, he drank a glass of paraffin oil for water!

When *In Town*, the first of the long series of musical comedies which have since reproduced their kind, was produced at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Arthur Roberts played the leading role of Captain Coddington. In it, his "rapid fire" methods, for which he was so famed, were seen to perfection. Roberts' style made him an extremely difficult man to follow, and yet Bradfield, who was his understudy, played the part in the same style and achieved a great success in it. Bradfield's versatility was shown by the perfect ease with which he stepped into Hayden Coffin's character of Charlie Goldfield in *A Gaiety Girl*—a purely baritone part—and sang the music with remarkable taste. Extremes met here indeed.

Even more remarkable was an exploit while touring with George Edwardes' company in the same piece. At a moment's notice Bradfield undertook the character comedy part of Dr. Brierley. During the playing of this part, he also sang the songs of the Hayden

Coffin role whenever they occurred in the performance—a notable achievement for which he was presented by George Edwardes with a gold watch. Actually it was with neither of these two parts that Bradfield first made the acquaintance of the public in *A Gaiety Girl*, but as the exuberant, high-spirited Bobbie Rivers, in which as far back as 1893 he originated what was known as “the straw hat light comedian.” An example of Bradfield’s capacity for hard work was shown when during his engagement in *The Little Michus*, he appeared every evening at the old Empire in Leicester Square as well. “Braddy” was a delightful companion, and his death in 1919 at the age of fifty-three left a gap which has never been filled on the musical comedy stage.

As already mentioned, *A Greek Slave* was first produced at Daly’s Theatre on June 8, 1898; the libretto by Owen Hall, lyrics by Harry Greenbank and Adrian Ross, and music by Sidney Jones. Marie Tempest was in the cast, which included Hilda Moody (Antonia). The three slaves were played by Gladys Homfrey, Maggie May and Elizabeth Kirby. Letty Lind appeared as Iris, a Greek slave, and Huntley Wright as Heliodorus, a Persian soothsayer. Another Greek slave was Scott Russell as Archias. Frank Boor—for many years manager of the London Hippodrome—appeared as Lollius, and Rutland Barrington as Marcus Pomponius, and Hayden Coffin as Diomed.

The piece was in two acts, the first being set in the Villa of Heliodorus, on the heights overlooking Rome, the second in Antonia’s Villa at Baiae.

A *Times* notice of the first production gives an adequate impression: “The long and professional career of *The Geisha* offers a serious difficulty—to provide a suitable successor. Perhaps there is no better solution than to choose surroundings in strong contrast to those of the former piece. Whilst strictly observing the various conventions that so quickly get themselves established in entertainments of this kind, its claims to comic rank are slightly founded on the idea of a Roman priest with a taste for fancy tortures, a personage who claims kinship with a certain Mikado of Japan, in a work of which the authors of *A Greek Slave* can hardly plead ignorance. The first act takes place in a gorgeous villa on the heights of Rome in the first Christian century. Here a wizard and his daughter do a roaming trade, in sham oracles, and keep a house full of slaves, one of whom, a handsome Greek, has won the heart of Maia, while two more love each other contented in their own rank of life. The magician is employed by the Roman Prefect to forward his suit with the Princess Antonia, a

lady who has never known the tender passion. In order, apparently, to excite the feelings of love in her breast, she is shown a statue of Eros modelled from the handsome Diomed. But when the statue is exhibited the slave has taken its place, assuming the character of the God of Love. Antonia buys him as a statue, and at the end of the first act we find Maia, who thinks the slave will remain by her side, confronted by a lover of stone. The restoration of the slave and the celebration of Saturnalia which gives the slaves their own way, occupy the second act and gives opportunity for a variety of simple and concerted performances."

"Mr. Sidney Jones has the recipe for writing strains of a more or less Sullivanian type such as are certain to be popular for a long time to come. Best number is a trio and finale in the first act. Flute obligatos are a favourite device of the composer and are prettily introduced. Miss Letty Lind's inevitable zoological song is this time about a frog, not a bird. Miss Gladys Homfrey's massive proportions fit the part she plays, the duties of which consist mainly of entering the scene at the conclusion of every song which in the natural course of things would be encored. For their gallant resistance to the encore nuisance, the authorities are to be warmly commended. The only number that in part had to be repeated was a stuttering song by Mr. Huntley Wright who got the utmost fun out of the part of the magician."

The figure of Rutland Barrington comes naturally into this rapid flashback provoked by Dame Marie's career. He will always be associated chiefly with the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas. Born at Penge on January 15, 1853, he made his debut as an actor in 1874 at the Olympic Theatre as Sir George Barclay in *Clancarty*. It was not until November 17, 1877, that Barrington had his first real opportunity; he turned it to excellent account as Dr. Daly, the Vicar in Gilbert and Sullivan's delightfully funny comic opera, *The Sorcerer*, at the now defunct Opera Comique Theatre. He also performed there in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and *Patience*. Barrington appeared at the Savoy Theatre with the D'Oyly Carte company from 1881 to 1888, in *Iolanthe*, *Princess Ida*, *The Mikado* and *Ruddigore*. *The Mikado*, perhaps the quaintest and cleverest of all the famous Gilbert and Sullivan series—cynical, grim, graceful, human—was produced at the Savoy on March 14th, 1885. Barrington was provided with the irresistibly funny part, Pooh-Bah. It was a rich stroke of fortune. On December 7, 1889, he reappeared as a member of the Savoy Company and created with immediate success the role of Guiseppe Palmieri in *The Gondoliers*.

With the exception of *The Yeomen of the Guard*, he was in the cast of all the Gilbert and Sullivan works at the Opera Comique and at the Savoy. He had a managerial adventure in 1888 at the St. James' Theatre. In his "Record of Thirty-Five Years' Experience on the English Stage," he wrote of his decision: "I did not look forward with any special pleasure to my reappearance as Pooh-Bah, as I had got rather tired of the part during the long original run, and my forebodings were realised as, after playing it for a month or so, I began to feel as if I had never played anything else, and it so worked on my brain that I felt compelled to ask Carte to release me, which he very kindly did, and within a very short time I returned to Daly's for *The Geisha*, which play was the commencement of a stay of ten years with George Edwardes."

Barrington was playing in a revival of *The Mikado* at the time, and he left the cast to take up Harry Monkhouse's part in *The Geisha*. His first appearance at Daly's was in September, 1894, in *A Gaiety Girl*, transferred from the Prince of Wales' Theatre. On the opening night, a souvenir containing photographs of the principals was given away. This was then a novelty, and it got the house "Buzzing" with interest—a good sign. When managers of the period were doubtful of success, they used to take themselves to the stage side of the curtain and listen. If they heard what was called "the bees buzzing," they knew that all was well. A satisfied audience, interested and happy, somehow creates, through the curtain, a noise exactly like a busy healthy hive. George Edwardes, or his representative, heard the buzz that night, and it grew louder at every interval.

Beautiful Marie Studholme, who, through the illness of Letty Lind, played the part of Alma Somerset, was at her best. Kate Cutler, George Grossmith (son of the Savoyard), Lottie Venne, Eric Lewis, Farren Soutar, Hayden Coffin, as well as Rutland Barrington, were all in that brilliant cast. Hidden from the public behind the curtain of a box was Nellie Farren, who had been the most popular of Gaiety girls, watching the performance of her son Farren Soutar. Had the audience known she was there, her reception would have equalled that accorded to the players. The pit and gallery seem to have had longer memories for their favourites in those days. At the fall of the curtain on the last act there was tremendous enthusiasm, and it was clear that the first musical comedy to be put on at Daly's was a success. After many calls for the company, George Edwardes was called and cheered, as was Sidney Jones (the pit had outsung the chorus of "Tommy Atkins," Hayden Coffin's fine song), and Owen Hall, the author.

Of Owen Hall—alias Jimmy Davis—innumerable stories are told. This pseudonym was wittily chosen. He called himself "Owen Hall" because he had long been in a state of "owing all" before financial success came along. Arthur Roberts, in contrast to Jimmy Davis's *nom de plume*, frequently—as part author of musical plays—called himself "Payne-Nunn." On one occasion Hall went to a well-known financier to ask how to get out of his difficulties. The financier said: "Meet your creditors, Jimmy." To which Jimmy replied: "My dear man, my sole object is to avoid them."

Owen Hall was a man of many parts. For some time he was dramatic critic of *The Pink 'Un*, and in this paper he slated actors under review so soundly that the editor soon found that all his theatrical friends were deserting him. Hall was, therefore, gently but firmly removed from the staff, and became editor of *The Bat*, a paper which ended its career in a welter of libel actions. But unsuccessful as a journalist, Hall was successful as a playwright, as was proved by the many smash hits he wrote for George Edwardes.

Marie Studholme has come into the picture as an understudy. We shall see more of her later, for she appeared in several of the Daly's musical plays. Like Gertie Millar (Countess of Dudley), Marie was a Yorkshire lass. She made her first appearance on the stage at the Lyric Theatre in 1891, in *La Cigale*, at the age of 16. Her fan-mail, as it would now be called, was tremendous.

CHAPTER VII.

A GLAMOROUS NIGHT.

ON October 21, 1899, Daly's curtain rose on a brilliant spectacle—*San Toy*.

At this time the Daly audience was possibly the most exacting and critical in the world ; it had come to expect production miracles from George Edwardes.

From the moment the curtain went up on *San Toy* the audience was ravished by the gorgeous Chinese settings of Joseph Harker and the costumes of Percy Anderson. Regular patrons declared that, in a pictorial sense, *San Toy* had never been equalled.

There was a magnificent cast, including Hayden Coffin (Captain Bobbie Preston), Rutland Barrington (Yen-How), Colin Coop (Sing Hi), and Huntley Wright (Li). Marie Tempest was San Toy. Hilda Moody appeared as Poppy, Gracie Leigh as Dudley, Maidie Hope as Ko-Fan, Scott Russell and Lionel Mackinder.

Those who can look back over the years and contemplate this spectacle through the glasses of memory will find no difficulty in re-capturing the glamour of that stage. Two items will surely never be forgotten by those who saw them then—the Pas Seul, danced by the fine artiste, Topsy Sinden, in the second act, and the inimitably funny walk of the diminutive Fred Kaye.

San Toy was the mixture as before, if you like, from the original recipe of *The Geisha* ; but it had theatrical brains and art behind it, and the George Edwardes hall-mark was on every scene. It was written by Edward Morton, a member of the staff of *The Referee*, and the music by Sidney Jones. Morton's debt to *The Geisha* was obvious. The themes of the two pieces are akin—the philanderings of a British officer and an Oriental maiden. But Morton contributed some very effective original embroidery to the theme and cleverly rang the changes with new surprises and turns of humour. The lyrics had grace and wit ; the music was sweetly cloying ; and there were plenty of novel effects and bright dances.

The world must have seemed very young and irresponsible to that first night audience, as the brilliant scenes unwound like coloured silks from a spool. But, in fact, the world outside Daly's on that night had troubles which some of the audience were no doubt glad to put out of mind temporarily. Disasters from South Africa were

accumulating to make, in a few weeks, perhaps the blackest Christmas experienced by that generation.

In Daly's Theatre, however, the Victorian world forgot the bad news from the Boer War and *San Toy* had a long run. Marie Tempest retired from the cast after a few weeks. Her successor was Florence Collingbourne, who later gave way to Ada Reeve. The last night was even more enthusiastic than the first. Ada Reeve fell exhausted after many encores of "All I want is a little bit more fun." When, finally, the curtain fell, the audience still clamoured for more. Huntley Wright, half-dressed, came on to a cleared stage and said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, if you carry on like this, I shall sit on the stage and burst into tears."

Some of the success of *San Toy* must certainly be credited to Adrian Ross, who contributed the lyrics. He was a Cambridge don with a genius for verse as light and tasty as a cream puff.

Sadi-Yacco, a well-known Japanese tragedienne, was at this time giving a season of Japanese plays in London, and her acting created a sensation. Harry Grattan, then at the Gaiety, wrote a short skit on one of her pieces which was introduced into the palace scene in *San Toy*, and acted before the Emperor and his Court. There were only two characters, a Japanese and his wife, played by Huntley Wright and Ethel Irving, who succeeded Gracie Leigh in the part of Dudley in July, 1900.

The story hinged on the husband's desertion of his wife for another woman. There was a violent quarrel which culminated in the wife stabbing the husband to the heart. After lamenting over his dead body, she committed suicide. This "cheerful" little play was received with enthusiasm. It was acted so intensely with such tragic force by both artists that the satire it intended to convey was lost in stark tragedy. At the end of a fortnight George Edwardes came to see the sketch. He watched it through his opera glasses from the back of the dress circle, and applauded as vigorously as anyone in the audience. Then, closing his glasses with a bang, he turned to the stage manager who was standing beside him, and said:

"I always knew Huntley was a fine actor, and that girl (Ethel Irving) will be a great success. A powerful little piece, magnificently acted! But take it off, Daly's Theatre is not a morgue!"

After *San Toy* came *A Country Girl*. It still lives in the delightful music by Lionel Monckton, and some of the additional numbers by Paul Rubens have lingered on. The book of *A Country Girl* was written by James T. Tanner, with lyrics by Adrian Ross. It was first produced at Daly's Theatre on January 18, 1902.

George Edwardes did not make many changes in his cast. There was Hayden Coffin (Geoffrey Challoner), Rutland Barrington (The Rajah of Bhong), Fred Kaye (Sir Joseph Verity), Willie Warde (Granfer Mummery), Gilbert Porteous (Douglas Verity), Akerman May (Lord Anchester), and Huntley Wright (Barry).

The ladies included Lilian Eldée (Marjorie Joy), Aileen D'Orme (Princess Mehelanah of Bhong), Gracie Leigh (Madame Sophie), and Evie Greene (Nan). Ethel Irving also appeared as Madame Sophie during the run, and when Lilian Eldée died in 1904, Olive Morrell took the part of Marjorie Joy.

The first night of *A Country Girl* left no doubt whatever that George Edwardes had rung the bell again. Again, the production was a triumph; but, as B. W. Findon, Editor of the "Play Pictorials," wrote: "The finest and most charming quality in *A Country Girl* is its music, and particularly that of the first act, in which Mr. Monckton has caught the real flavour of madrigal England."

A Country Girl was Lionel Monckton's first ambitious work, apart from his collaboration with Ivan Caryll in the music of the Gaiety musical comedies. Personally, I think his *A Country Girl* music is the finest he ever wrote. Some are of the opinion that his *Quaker Girl* music is better, but I do not agree.

The first act of *A Country Girl* contains such splendid numbers as "Yo Ho, Little Girl," sung by Huntley Wright and chorus, "Try Again Johnnie," sung by Evie Greene, "Boy and Girl" duet, sung by Hayden Coffin and Olive Morrell, the music to Topsy Sinden's country dance, the Rajah of Bhong's song, sung by Rutland Barrington, "Under the Deodar," sung by Aileen D'Orme, and the magnificent finale.

In the second act, Monckton's best numbers are "My Own Little Girl," sung by Hayden Coffin, "Come to Devonshire," sung by Evie Greene, a spirited sextette "Take Your Pretty Partner to the Ball," and "Peace, Peace," sung by Rutland Barrington. Among several good numbers by Paul Rubens there were "Coo," "Two Little Chicks," sung by Gracie Leigh and Huntley Wright, and a "quarrelling" duet sung by the same pair. The overture to *A Country Girl* is specially good. Lionel Monckton, who wrote hundreds of tunes, never wrote a bad one.

Son of Sir John Monckton, who was at one time Town Clerk of the City of London, Lionel was musical critic of the *Daily Telegraph*. He was educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, and was called to the Bar in 1885. At Oxford he was a prominent actor associated with the Philo-Thespian Club and the O.U.D.S.; for the latter he wrote

incidental music. His first compositions were heard in public at the Gaiety and other theatres under the management of George Edwardes. One early success for a musical comedy was "What will you have to drink before we say good night," sung in *Cinder-Ellen Up Too Late* at the Old Gaiety by, I think, that great artist Fred Leslie.

Lionel Monckton was part composer of *The Shop Girl*, *The Messenger Boy*, *The Circus Girl*, *The Toreador*, *The Orchid*, *The Spring Chicken*, *The New Aladdin*, *The Girls of Gottenberg*, *Our Miss Gibbs*, *The Arcadians*, *The Mousme*, *Airs and Graces*, *Bric-A-Brac*, and *The Boy*. He composed *The Quaker Girl* and *The Dancing Mistress*, and contributed many popular numbers to *The Geisha*, *San Toy*, and *A Greek Slave*, as well as all the music for *The Cingalee*, with the exception of some numbers by Paul Rubens and Howard Talbot. The tuneful, nostalgic airs are often included in popular selections on the wireless to-day.

CHAPTER VIII.

MORE MELODIOUS MONEY MAKERS.

WITH the production of *The Cingales* at Daly's Theatre on March 5, 1904, George Edwardes returned from madrigal England to the exotic oriental, from sweet sentiment to grotesque comedy. Lionel Monckton proved his mastery here also, and about half a dozen popular numbers were contributed by Paul Rubens.

Hayden Coffin was there with two delightful Monckton songs. Sybil Arundale sang Rubens' "Sloe Eyes," and Gracie Leigh "She's All Right." For Huntley Wright, Rubens wrote "The Wonderful English Pot" and "Something Devilish Wrong," and for Isabel Jay "You and I, I and You." Gracie Leigh and Huntley Wright also sang a Rubens duet called "Golliwogs."

Howard Talbot, part composer with Lionel Monckton of *The Arcadians*, had one number which was sung by Louis Bradfield and the Tea Girls—"Four Little Girls of Ceylon." W. H. Risque, who wrote the lyric of this pretty lilt, also gave Huntley Wright and Gracie Leigh a chance to show their comedy talent in "Pretty Poll."

Big hits of *The Cingalee* included Isabel Jay's rendering of "My Heart's at Your Feet" and "There's Nothing Much More to Say," sung by Rutland Barrington.

Edwardes, it can be seen from the names above, was loyal to his old cast. Fred Kaye and Willie Warde were in, Louis Bradfield and F. J. Blackman, who in later years became stage manager and producer at Daly's. With the ladies mentioned above were Carrie Moore, Nina Sevensing and Doris Stocker. Again Topsy Sinden had a *Pas Seul*.

There was some magnificent dancing in *The Cingalee*. Few who saw the piece will have forgotten the Fire Dance in the second act. This dance derived from a Cingalese New Year custom when all light is extinguished and the High Priest kindles fire in the temple's tower—a signal for the Feast of Fire to begin.

The Times notice of *The Cingalee*, published on March 7, 1904, gives a good summary of the piece:

"The part of Peggy Sabine (played by Gracie Leigh) began as a clever presentation of the modern adventuress, who no longer wears scarlet, smokes cigarettes and breaks the commandments, but keeps

a beauty-shop, is rigidly respectable and lives on her "wits," and the follies of the rich and great. Miss Leigh played it to the life with exactly the pretty sharpness of the type. She was equally as good when the part degenerated. For the best point of all we have to thank no one but Miss Isabel Jay; she had nothing to do but sing and smile, and she did both in a way that, as a matter of course, made her the most distinguished and acceptable feature of the evening. Mr. Hayden Coffin, strange to say, was neither a captain nor an artist. True he wore white in the second act, and looked his best in it, but it was not a white uniform or a drill suit. The Baboo lawyer, Chambhuddy Ram, though frankly borrowed from Mr. Anstey, is handled by the Author in a way that justifies the loan. His convoluted idioms and grotesque perversions of figurative speech are constantly just reaching the point at which they are really amusing, at which it does not need a Huntley Wright to make them amusing. It is when you turn to the book of the words and find the lyrics allotted to Chambhuddy Ram, confined to the old, old topics of flirtation, and drink and ladies' evening dresses, that you realise how much the Authors owe to Mr. Huntley Wright."

The Little Michus followed *The Cingalee* at Daly's. It was launched on April 29th, 1905, and described as a new and original musical play in three acts by A. Vanloo and G. Duval, English version by Henry Hamilton, lyrics by Percy Greenbank and music by Andre Messenger.

The cast was as follows: General Des Ifs, Willie Edouin; Gaston Rigaud (Captain of the Hussars), Robert Evett; Pierre Michu (Provision Merchant), Ambrose Manning; Aristide Vert (his assistant), W. Louis Bradfield; Bagnolet (Soldier Servant to General Des Ifs), Huntley Wright; Madam Du Tertre, Deborah Volar; Madame Rousselin, Gracie St. George; Mlle. Herpin (School Mistress), Vera Beringer; Madame Michu (Michu's wife,) Amy Augarde. The two little Michus were played by Adrienne Augarde and Mabel Green, and six school girls by Alice D'Orme, Nine Sevensing, Doris Stocker, Agnes Gunn, Alice Hatton and Freda Vivian. Act one depicted the Playground of Mlle. Herpin's School, Act two Salon at General des Ifs. Both sets were painted by Joseph Harker. Act three was set in Michu's shop (Les Halles). This scene was the work of Walter Hann. The period was 1810 in Paris.

The music of *The Little Michus* is not first class. There are, however, many characteristic and attractive numbers, and plenty of grace and melody. Captain Rigaud's "Crying for the Moon," and Blanche Marie's "Little Sister," sung in the third act, are fine numbers.

Robert Evett stepped from the Church to the stage. His splendid

tenor voice was trained for service in the Marchioness of Hastings' private Chapel near Atherstone in Warwickshire, Evett's native county. When he was still in his teens he joined one of the D'Oyly Carte touring opera companies, and it was the revival of *The Gondoliers* which provided him with an entrance into London. This was in 1897 at the Savoy Theatre, where he was so successful that he was entrusted with the creation of new parts in *The Rose of Persia* and *The Emerald Isle*.

Evett was for three years the leading tenor at Daly's Theatre, and he did much to make *The Merry Widow* one of the greatest of all theatrical successes. In later years, after the death of George Edwardes, he went into management and looked after the interests of Daly's Theatre for a time. One of his winners was *The Maid of the Mountains*.

Andre Messager, composer of *The Little Michus*, is better known for his delightful *Veronique*, a musical gem. He was born at Montlucon on December 30, 1853, and died on February 24, 1929. Formerly director of music and conductor at the Opera Comique, Paris, he became director of the Paris Opera House and later at Covent Garden, London. He began composing as a schoolboy by scribbling the chords for about sixty masses in notebooks. At the age of 21 he began an operetta which was never completed, although he continued to work at it from time to time until he died.

In 1894, Messager wrote a piece for the Savoy Theatre—*Mirette*—which was a failure. When a successor was required for Sullivan's opera *Ivanhoe* at the English Opera House—now the Palace Theatre—Messager's *La Basoche* was produced. This piece has faded out of memory; but his *Monsieur Beaucaire*, which was produced in 1919 at the Prince's Theatre, and ran for 221 performances, has survived.

In my opinion, Messager's *Veronique* is one of the most delightful comic operas ever composed. It was originally produced by a French company at the Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill Gate, in 1903, before its production by George Edwardes at the Apollo Theatre in 1904 with George Graves and Ruth Vincent in the cast.

George Graves eventually succeeded Willie Edouin in the part of General des Ifs, this being his first appearance at Daly's. Sir Henry (then Mr.) Lytton came to Daly's in the spring of 1906 in succession to W. Louis Bradfield, in the part of Aristide Vert in *The Little Michus*. This was Sir Henry's only appearance at Daly's. The epitome of all Savoyards died in 1936.

On October 27, 1906, a new comedy opera, entitled *The Lady*

Dandies (Les Merveilleuses) was produced at Daly's by Victorien Sardou. It was adapted for the English stage by Basil Hood. Lyrics were by Adrian Ross, music by Hugo Felix, with three numbers by Lionel Monckton, "A Lady with a Dowry," "Publicity" and "Only a question of time," all three sung by Huntley Wright.

The cast included Dorlis (a refugee Aristocrat), Robert Evett; Lagurille, W. Louis Bradfield; St. Amour (Secretary to the Director Barras), W. H. Berry; Malicorne (Police Agent of Barras), Fred Kaye Des Gouttières (Secretary to the Directors), Willie Warde; Tournesol (Police Agent of the Director Carnot), Fred Emney; Alexis (Head Waiter at the Café du Caveau), Scott Russell; Pervenche (Ragot's Daughter), Mlle Mariette Sully; Illyrine (Ragot's Niece), Denise Orme; Liane, Elizabeth Firth; Eglé (wife of Des Gouttières), Maude Percival; and Lodoiska (La Merveilleuse), Evie Greene. Merveilleuses were played by Eleanor Souray, Nina Sevensing, Dorothy Dunbar, M. Erskine and E. Barker. The synopsis of scenery was as follows:—Act I. The Tent of the Café Du Caveau in the Palais Royal Gardens, painted by Joseph Harker. Act II., Scene I. The Stock Market on the Perron at the Palais Royal, and Scene II., Reception Room at St. Amour's Town House, the work of Hawes Craven. Act III., Tricolour Fête at the Palace of the Luxembourg, the work of Joseph Harker.

Of the production of *The Lady Dandies*, *The Times* wrote—"It is a well-made, well-mounted comic opera, full of movement and fun, with a bright plot that runs through without a break, and plenty of amusing and extravagant people. These absurd people are very delightful on the stage with their love affairs, and all the plots, conspiracies, and other devices for passing the moments they could spare from serious business of life.

"As a foil to Lagurille, ex-hairdresser and Lodoiska, the leader of the Merveilleuses, we have a story of time and faithful love, but for that we must look to a real noble, Dorlis, an *emigre* in disguise, who has been spirited away to the wars in Italy, while his wife, Illyrine, has been forced to obtain a divorce and is even now being married to a rich Bulgarian, St. Amour. How Dorlis is caught by St. Amour hiding in the lady's room and arrested without the aid of the rival police agents, Malicorne and Tournesol; how Lagurille is arrested as a conspirator and how Illyrine saves her (first) husband by cajoling Barras, and the Merveilleuses come to the rescue of their pet Lagurille, form the matter of the play.

"The period and the scenes give ample opportunities for the inevitable splendour of production. Miss Denise Orme's 'Cuckoo'

song was delightful, and so was Miss Evie Greene's 'Ring-a-ring-a-roses.' Perhaps the best of Mr. Hugo Felix's work lies in his choruses, and especially the finales. The 'Peace' chorus is full of charm and the finale to the second act is very cleverly built up."

In February, 1907, Huntley Wright took up the part of St. Amour in place of W. H. Berry, who subsequently appeared in Fred Emney's part of Tournesol. This was Berry's first appearance at Daly's Theatre, but not his first under George Edwardes' management. the Guv'nor heard of him through George Grossmith, in 1905, when that "Berry-and-Bright" comedian was playing at Broadstairs with a popular and successful concert party called "The Bohemians." Edwardes at once engaged this merry-maker, and gave him and his wife, Kitty Hanson, a three years' contract. Berry had originally worked at a commercial job in the City, and for twelve years he was well-known as a singer and entertainer on seaside piers in the summer, and concert rooms in the winter. His first appearance in London was at the London Pavilion in January, 1905. He stayed with Mr. Edwardes for many years under an extended contract.

Berry also appeared in musical plays, under George Edwardes' management at the Adelphi and Gaiety Theatres. At Daly's he appeared in *The Merry Widow*, in which his Nisch was described as a gem of extravagant comic acting, singing and dancing. Hannen Swaffer wrote of him—"W. H. Berry is the best of the prop-using comedians. Give him a fly-paper, a drum and a balloon, and he can earn £250 a week." His other successes at Daly's were in *The Dollar Princess*, *A Waltz Dream*, *The Count of Luxembourg*, *Gipsy Love*, *The Marriage Market*, *A Country Girl* (revival), *Betty*, and *Lilac Time*. He has the reputation of being one of the most natural comic men on the stage.

Many people suppose that because a comedian is funny on the stage (it is his business to be that) he is almost certain to be the same in private life. They are disappointed and even annoyed if he turns out to be nothing of the kind. A friend of Berry's, a very celebrated comedian who has made the whole world laugh, was invited to join a week-end party at a country house. He arrived in time for an excellent dinner. Afterwards, just when he was enjoying the brilliant wit which the port had loosened, the bombshell fell.

"Mr. Blank," murmured his hostess in her most inviting voice, "We do hope you will tell us some of those amusing anecdotes of yours." There was general approval, and the company sat back in their chairs prepared to laugh their loudest at the sallies which were coming. The comedian, mindful of his duty to a hostess, did his

best. Swallowing his chagrin at the forced return to the professional joke, he recounted some trifles which had always won such applause—on the stage. On the stage! As Berry says. That's just it. Take a comedian off the stage, and you take the craftsman from his craft, the sovereign from his throne. There was polite laughter, of course, but shorn of their stage setting, the stories did not really "go." Shortly afterwards the hostess changed the conversation. "Old so-and-so's not so funny after all," was the thought that went round the table. Taken at an unfair advantage, the famous comedian's reputation fell with a bang.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GUV'NOR'S GREATEST TRIUMPH.

THEATRICAL history was made at Daly's Theatre on June 8, 1907, when *The Merry Widow* was produced. After the first night it seemed to most of the audience that there was no reason why the piece should not run for ever. Actually, *The Merry Widow* ran for 778 performances. But mere statistics can convey no adequate impression of the glory—there is really no other word for it—won by this Viennese musical comedy. It was certainly the crown of George Edwardes' success, and into its production he put all his skill, experience, patience and feeling for the theatre.

But *The Merry Widow* was something more than a workaday musical comedy. Its own authentic and exceptional qualities were expressed by the spirit of the time. It hit Edwardian England at the peak of its lightest social mood. It brought Danubian romance to a society still fettered by the pursuit of wealth but already conscious of uneasy stirrings outside the portals of Forsytedom. One might say, indeed, that *The Merry Widow*—in a theatrical sense—was the last romantic fling of a world already passing into the shadows of crisis and war.

There has certainly been nothing in the theatre quite like *The Merry Widow* in spirit since. There have, of course, been outstanding successes in the same genre; but nothing so expressive of gay insouciance. Since those days there has been a different—one might say a duller note—even in productions of the lightest order.

Merely to look back on the cast of the first appearance of *The Merry Widow* at Daly's is to recapture the thrill of George Edwardes' greatest triumph. It included Robert Evett as Vicomte Camille De Jolidon, Lennox Pawle as Marquis De Cascada, Gordon Cleather as M. De St. Brioche, Fred Kaye as General Novikovich, W. H. Berry as Nisch, Ralph Roberts as the comical little waiter at Maxim's, Joseph Coyne as Prince Danilo and George Graves as Baron Popoff. Elizabeth Firth appeared as Natalie, Mabel Russell as Fi-Fi, and other girls at Maxim's included Daisie Irving and Phyllis le Grand.

Lily Elsie was Sonia, *The Merry Widow*. Contrary to the general belief *The Merry Widow* does not hold the performance record. *The Maid of the Mountains* ran for a longer period, but it never attained the Widow's world-wide popularity.

Franz Lehar's masterpiece was originally produced in Vienna on January 3, 1906, and in London—as already stated—on June 8, 1907, where it ran until July 31, 1909, having been seen at Daly's by 1,167,000 people. During that time King Edward VII. saw it four times. It has been revived at Daly's and other theatres. At one time it was being performed at over 400 theatres in Europe on the same evening, and at no single presentation was there a record of failure. At a performance in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) at the Royal Opera House, the price of a box was as high as £100, and the cheapest seat could not be secured for less than £5. It brought more than £1,000,000 to the box-office of Daly's alone.

The first visit Lehar paid to England was on an Austrian battleship. He was conductor of a marine band then. Victor Leon, the author of *The Merry Widow*, had at first entrusted the score to another composer, but was dissatisfied with the result. It was then that Leon's daughter happened to tell her father that there was a very good-looking conductor at the Skating Rink at Vienna, and that his marches were charming. "Why not try him for the score of *The Merry Widow*?" she asked.

As it happened, Lehar had sent in the score of *Tatjana*, his grand opera, to Leon a year before, and the latter, impressed by his daughter's words, now went through the score and made an appointment with Lehar for the same afternoon. The next day the agreement to compose the music of *The Merry Widow* was signed.

One of Lehar's most famous waltzes has the title of "Gold and Silver," and the saying in Vienna was that he composed the silver part before *The Merry Widow*, and the gold part afterwards.

The career of *The Merry Widow* has been full of incident. It set a fashion in hats, created a waltz craze. A *Merry Widow's Club* was started in New York, and we have had a *Merry Widow Sauce*. A parrot in Cardiff, belonging to the musical director of one of the theatres there was taught to hum and whistle the tune of the famous waltz. The inhabitants of the little town of Gröningen, in Holland, were surprised to hear one Sunday morning the bells of the parish church peeling forth the *Merry Widow* waltz.

On Sunday evening, January 31, 1909, a dinner was held at the Hotel Cecil, where a company of 550 play-goers gathered at the call of the O.P. Club to celebrate the triumph of *The Merry Widow*, the principal guests being George Edwardes, George Graves, Joseph Coyne, and Lily Elsie, who had an ovation when she was presented with a silver casket fittingly inscribed.

At the last performance of the original run of *The Merry Widow*

at Daly's, all the stalls were sold for a guinea a piece, one gentleman offering 30 guineas for a particular seat. Some enthusiastic playgoers waited in the queues from 5-30 in the morning. Those seeking admission to the gallery stood nine deep and extended a distance of 100 yards, while the pit queue was five and six deep, and many queued up by special permission of Sir Oswald Stoll at the side of the London Hippodrome. The theatre was beautifully decorated with crimson and pink flowers. The private boxes were bowers of roses, the occupants of the circles and galleries looked at the stage across masses of foliage and flowers, and the proscenium was like the entrance to a great arbour.

There were no fewer than six representatives of the title rôle at Daly's Theatre during the first run: Lily Elsie, Emmy Wehlen (a German actress), Constance Drever, Gertrude Glyn, Daisie Irving and Clara Evelyn. Other "Widows" in the provinces and in London have been Gertrude Lester, Madeline Seymour, Deborah Volar, Norah Barry, Phyllis Le Grand, Adrienne Brune, Louie Pounds, Evelyn Laye, Effie Mann (Tom Mann's daughter), Helen Gilliland, and Madge Elliott.

At the Continental theatres, some of the "Widows" were pretty—some were not; some were fat and some could sing; a few were young. But all without exception, one is told, were irresistible.

The story of how Lily Elsie was chosen by George Edwardes for the name part in London makes interesting reading. She was playing in *See-See*, in the provinces, and one night George Edwardes came down to see her. Shortly after his return to London, he wired her to get her things packed post-haste and travel to London to see him. She did so, wondering what it meant. She called at the Guv'nor's office at Daly's Theatre and he met her with the words: "I want you to go at once to Vienna to see a play which is all the rage there." Lily Elsie did not know what she was going to see, but she went, and the piece turned out to be *The Merry Widow*.

She saw a performance in Vienna, but it was in German, of which language she understood not a word. George Edwardes, who had also gone to Vienna, explained the play to her, and said: "What do you think of the part?" Lily Elsie replied that it was very wonderful, but she did not think she would be able to undertake it as it was not her style and she had never done anything like it before. She returned to London, however, and began rehearsing the part, but everybody was against her playing it. The actress whom Lily Elsie saw playing the part in Vienna was a big woman, and when Lily Elsie was introduced to the author and he was told that she was to play the part in

London, he shrugged his shoulders, and in broken English said :
" She look more like ze merry widow's daughter zan ze merry widow."

George Edwardes encouraged her and said he had confidence in her, so she made up her mind to go through with it. She had only seen the piece twice in Vienna, but the moment she appeared on the stage she said to herself : " Here goes ; now you've got to do it, my girl!"—and we know the rest. For Lily Elsie became the talk of the world and the most popular actress in London at the age of twenty-one.

That the actor is at times no better judge of what is good for him than is the manager in his choice of plays is instanced when *The Merry Widow* first came up for discussion. The Guv'nor decided that the part of Danilo should be played by Joseph Coyne. Joe was positive, however, that the part would not suit him, and several times asked to be freed. George Edwardes was equally positive that Joe would make a hit in the part. Events proved the Guv'nor right.

Victor Leon and Leo Stein's book, as adapted for Daly's Theatre, sets out the love-tangle of Prince Danilo of Marsovia and Sonia, a wealthy widow. The music is typically Viennese, with its all-pervading suggestion of the dance, its quaintly melodious rhythms, and its delicious entrain. That Franz Lehar, the composer, is an Austrian, every bar of his music proclaims, but it must not be assumed that the entire score is given over to dance measures. Much of it has a far greater artistic value, and generally speaking, the score attains a higher standard than is commonly met with on the light musical stage.

The Merry Widow is in three acts : First, the Marsovian Embassy, Paris ; second, Grounds of Sonia's house, near Paris ; third, Maxim's Restaurant, also in Paris. The producer at Daly's was J. A. E. Malone.

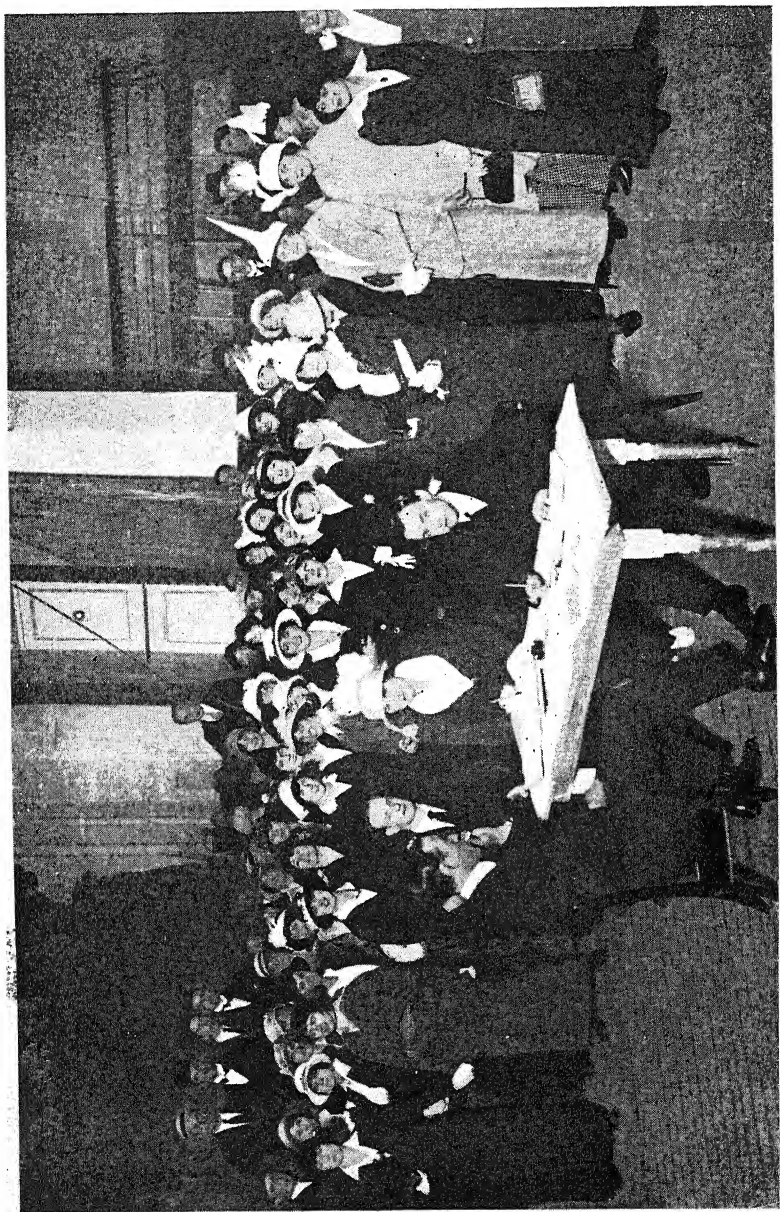
Lily Elsie's rise to fame was as romantic as any of the stories in which she delighted audiences on the stage. Like so many stars—for instance, June and Evelyn Laye—she began her theatrical career in childhood and acquired a stage technique as naturally and automatically as most children learn their letters. But she had to be " discovered."

Perhaps that great comedian George Graves can claim the credit for having " discovered " Lily Elsie. When he was playing in *Jack and the Beanstalk* at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, he noticed a little girl who was put on before a front cloth, while the scene was being changed behind, to sing " Silver Threads among the Gold." She was billed as " Little Elsie." This was the child that grew into magical Lily Elsie of Daly's, the triumphant star of *The Merry Widow*.

Her real name is Cotton. Born in Leeds on April 8, 1886, she



GABRIELLE RAY



Signing on the Companies of George Edwardes' Autumn Tours.

The 1914 fashions of the ladies are interesting.

At the table are F. J. Blackman (Producer) and R. Highley (Assistant).

came to Manchester when she was two years old and spent her early years in Salford. She was a delicate child, and her parents did not steer her deliberately towards a stage career. But quite early on she developed a remarkable talent for mimicry—one of the authentic signs of a born player.

"Little Elsie" soon extended the exercise of this talent beyond the family circle and appeared at local concerts, where she gave imitations of Vesta Tilley. She often performed at the London and North-Western Hotel, in Cross Lane, Salford.

She made her debut on the professional stage at the age of ten in the title rôle of *Little Red Riding Hood*, at the Queen's Theatre, Manchester. It ran for six weeks there and finished with a six weeks' provincial tour.

Two years later she appeared at music halls at Hull, Bristol and other towns. When she was fourteen, she went on tour in *McKenna's Flirtation*, which had a successful run of twelve months.

Lily Elsie's first important engagement was in 1901, as principal girl in *Dick Whittington*, at the Camden Theatre, London. At Christmas, 1902, she appeared as Morgiana in *The Forty Thieves* at the Coronet Theatre, London; after which she went on tour with *Three Little Maids* playing Hilda Moody's part.

She had been on tour only three weeks, when Sir (then Mr.) George Dance asked her to go to London to appear in *A Chinese Honeymoon*. She did not like London and was not very keen on the offer, but eventually she decided to accept it and appeared at the Strand Theatre as Princess Soo-Soo. In this part she made her first notable success, and soon all Britain was singing her song "Egypt."

At this point George Edwardes approached her with an offer to play the title rôle in *The Duchess of Dantzic*; but she was under contract with Dance to appear in the musical play *Madame Sherry*. Some time later, however, she joined George Edwardes' company in *The Cingalee*. She also appeared under his management in *Lady Madcap* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre in 1905, and in *The Little Michus* at Daly's Theatre in July, 1905. At the Prince of Wales' Theatre in 1906 she appeared in *The Little Cherub*, and in June, 1906, at the same theatre in *See-See*.

Lily Elsie made her first appearance at the Gaiety Theatre, London, on September 29, 1906, in *The New Aladdin*. I have already told the story how she was chosen by Mr. Edwardes to play the title rôle of *The Merry Widow*. At the final performance of that piece, when the scene at Maxim's in the third act came to an end, and the company stood grouped behind a barrier of bouquets and baskets of flowers, the

whole house rose to its feet. From the gallery came one deep roar, above which cries of "Joe" (Joe Coyne) and "Elsie" could be heard. George Edwardes came on the stage, held up his hand, and said with emotion :

"Ladies and gentlemen—I shan't delay you for long. After being with us for two years, *The Merry Widow* is to leave us. We are all sorry, for on both sides of the curtain we love *The Merry Widow*."

An uproar followed. Cries of "We all love Lily Elsie!" "Who loves Lily Elsie?"—"I do" filled the house.

The Guv'nor continued: "It only remains for me to thank you for your support, and to say that in September I shall produce another musical play entitled *The Dollar Princess*."

Lily Elsie was sent specially to Manchester to play her original part of Sonia in *The Merry Widow* at the Princes' Theatre, during the week of October 5, 1908, because so many people in Manchester and Salford had written to George Edwardes asking that she might be allowed to come. The Manchester and Salford girls, who knew Lily Elsie in her early days, waited at the stage-door every night to speak to her and pressed forward to shake her by the hand. By special request, also, she performed the following week with the same company, which included Leonard Mackay as Danilo, W. H. Rawlins, and Eric Thorne as Baron Popoff, at the Court Theatre, Liverpool. She appeared at the Gaiety, Dublin, with George Edwardes' No. 1 Company, during the week of August 24, 1908. Business was so big that it led to a speculation in tickets. The following quotation from the *Dublin Evening Herald* is interesting :—

"Having taken most of the Continent of Europe and other parts of the Globe by storm, *The Merry Widow* had laid siege to Dublin, and to infer from last night's performance at the Gaiety, the Irish capital is safe to be added to the list of places captured by this most alluring of the daughters of Eve. One always expects very high class in Mr. George Edwardes' productions, but *The Merry Widow* is one of the finest things he has ever put on the stage, and, inasmuch as Miss Lily Elsie had come over specially to take the name part, in which she made a hit at Daly's, for once a Dublin audience had an opportunity of witnessing a production quite equal to the genuine article."

Lily Elsie was now at the summit of her career. Her next appearance at Daly's was as Alice Conder in *The Dollar Princess*, the lead part of this delightful musical play.

In December, 1909, much curiosity was aroused by the fact that King Manuel of Portugal, while staying at Buckingham Palace, visited

Daly's Theatre to see *The Dollar Princess* twice in one week. People discussing King Manuel's double visit scented a romance. Never before in the history of musical comedy in London had a king paid visits twice in the same week to one play. Moreover, King Manuel was young—only 20. His interest was explained by the fact that he was fascinated by the charm of Lily Elsie, the lovely music, and the gorgeous production.

Lily Elsie next appeared at Daly's as Franzl—the part originally played by Gertie Millar—in a revival of *A Waltz Dream*. After that she was at Daly's as Angele Didier in *The Count of Luxembourg*. During the run of this piece she retired from the cast, her part being taken by Daisy Irving. On June 27, 1911, Lily Elsie appeared at a Gala performance at His Majesty's Theatre, as Ellena in *The Critic*, in celebration of the Coronation of King George V. This great artiste and charming personality retired temporarily in June, 1925. Her re-appearance on the stage at the King's Theatre, Southsea, on March 14, 1927, in a musical play *The Blue Train*, which eventually came to the Prince of Wales' Theatre, London, aroused enthusiasm. The piece was described in the Press as "one of the most brilliant first night performances since the war, and Miss Elsie, whose youthfulness and charm delighted her most fervent admirers, scored a triumph." She returned to Daly's in a comedy *The Truth Game*, in June, 1929.

Lily Elsie used to tell a good story against herself, which she called "The falling of a Star." During the long run of *The Merry Widow*, two of her friends went into a shop to buy some picture post-cards. They asked for some of Lily Elsie. Unfortunately there was none to be had in the shop. One of the friends remarked: "Well, it doesn't matter. I saw some pictures of her the other day in a shop down the street."

"Ah!" retorted the haughty shop girl, "down the street? Yes, no doubt you can get them there, but here we only keep stars!"

Lord Kenmare wrote in "The Londoner's Log" in the *Sunday Express* of October 23, 1938:

"Lily Elsie sprang upon a surprised world like a beautiful water flower appearing overnight in a bare pond."

When King George V. visited *The Blue Train* at the Prince of Wales Theatre, he personally congratulated Lily Elsie on her successful return to the stage.

When George Graves first saw "Little Elsie" on the stage at Manchester, he could not have guessed that years later he would be playing Baron Popoff to her Sonia in a piece called *The Merry Widow*.

But that is how things turned out, and in the Popoff part "G.G.", a man of infinite wit and humour, scored his greatest success in musical comedy.

What a great comedian he is ! A master of the comic art, he bubbles with fun from the top of his head to the tips of his fingers, the ends of his toes ; wit flows from his lips in a never-ending stream.

George Graves was born in London, made his first appearance on the stage at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, in 1900, in *Aladdin*. Always ready to sing, dance, weep, or gag at a moment's notice, always cheery and an inveterate practical joker, the word "impossible" is unknown to him. He appeared in London for the first time in 1903 in George Edwardes' production of *The School Girl*. Here is a sidelight on the character of "G.G." It was his custom to "walk the wards" of great London hospitals unknown to all except the night porters and night sisters. He carried a large bottle of eau-de-Cologne for the patients, and brought into their lives some of the humour with which he delighted millions of play-goers. He did this humane service for years, unknown even to his friends. Behind his errands of mercy is a story of thwarted youthful ambition. For George Graves was once a medical student at Owens College, Manchester.

A Press representative chanced to see him armed with his bottle of eau-de-Cologne, during a "round" of a ward on tiptoe at 2 a.m. one morning. Graves stopped at the bedside of each sleepless patient, whispered a few reassuring words, fired off one of his stage "gags," applied eau-de-Cologne to an outstretched hand or fevered forehead, and moved on.

Arthur Roberts had such an inexhaustible wit in his younger days that it is said he was once given a blank sheet of paper and a bottle of champagne as his part in a new Gaiety production. George Graves is second only to Arthur Roberts in the mastery of unrehearsed "business." Once he was completely "dried-up" while on the stage with another actor, and as both were on the O.P. side they could not rely on the prompter. Realising at length that desperate remedies were necessary and that he could continue gagging no longer, Graves clapped his hand on his brother actor's shoulder and led him across the stage towards the prompt corner, at the same time saying, to the great amusement of the audience : "Come along, my boy, you must get a bit nearer to the prompter."

In April, 1909, Lily Elsie went to Biarritz for a fortnight's holiday, and during that time her part in *The Merry Widow* was taken by the German actress, Emmy Wehlen, a native of Mannheim, in Baden.

She received her first lessons in music at the local conservatoire and first became known in comic-opera at Munich. From there she went to Berlin, where George Edwardes heard of her performance in Victor Hollander's *Mitternachts Madchen*. Mr. Hollander was the first musical director of the Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill Gate, when it opened in 1898.

Another popular "Merry Widow" at Daly's was Clara Evelyn, a London-born actress. Always passionately fond of music, she determined to become a pianist. When she was old enough, her people enrolled her as a pupil at the Royal College of Music. There, she gained an open scholarship for five years and took singing lessons. Madame Albani happened to hear her sing, and on her advice Clara Evelyn began to train seriously. A few years of hard study was followed by the usual run of concert "At Home" engagements, where she often appeared in the role of a society entertainer. It is strange, but true, that Clara Evelyn never had any inclination to act, and she always disliked musical comedy. But her opinion entirely changed after seeing *The Merry Widow*, for she felt a part like that would easily tempt her to join the profession. Shortly afterwards, George Edwardes offered her the lead in his No. 1 *Merry Widow* touring company; she accepted and eventually appeared in the part in London, during Lily Elsie's absence from the cast in February, 1909.

Curiously enough, just before the Guv'nor engaged her, Clara Evelyn sang in the Royal Choral Society's performance of "Elijah," and so went straight from oratorio to musical comedy. She made a big hit in the title rôle in *The Dollar Princess* on tour, and at Daly's her first original part was Jana Van Raalte in the same composer's (Leo Fall)—*The Girl in the Train* at the Vaudeville Theatre, in June, 1910.

CHAPTER X.

ANOTHER MUSICAL MASTERPIECE.

MUSICAL comedy was now at its peak. This had developed a style and had crystallised into a definite theatrical art form. Under George Edwardes' production genius and his flair for pure entertainment, the theatre-going public had acquired a taste for musical comedy, which was at once critical and appreciative.

After *The Merry Widow* it seemed that the musical comedy form was not capable of any further creative exploitation. The "Widow" appeared to have touched top. But there were in fact, more delights to come, among them the haunting and, in its own way, the unsurpassed *Dollar Princess*, Leo Fall's light musical masterpiece.

Its first production in England was at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, on December 24, 1908, when it was billed as "A new play with music, adapted by Basil Hood from the German of A. M. Willner and F. Greenbaum, with lyrics by Adrian Ross."

The Manchester production cast included Robert Michaelis ("Hayden Coffin the second") as Freddy Fairfax; Vernon Davidson as John, Earl of Quorn; Howard Cridland as Dick (Conder's nephew), Harry Parker as Tom (Conder's brother), Willie Warde as Sir James McGregor (Footman to Conder), and Richard Golden as Phineas Q. Conder (President of the Oil Trust). Hilda Moody appeared in the title rôle, Alice, Conder's daughter. Alice Pollard as Daisy, Conder's niece. Doris Dewar as Hon. Edith Dalrymple (Upper Housemaid), Mabel Duncan as Lady Augusta Broadstairs (Lady's maid to Alice), May Sarony as Lady Dorothy Datchet (Under Housemaid), Alice Moffat as Dulcie Dobbin (A Californian Girl), and Kitty Gordon, who took the part of Olga (A Lion Queen), at the last moment. The part was originally to have been played by a French vaudeville actress, Arlette Dorgere, but she was taken ill about a week before the production was due at the Prince's, Manchester, and had to relinquish the part.

With rehearsals so far advanced, the position was a serious one, but George Edwardes was fortunate enough to engage Kitty Gordon, (The Hon. Mrs. Horsley Beresford), who was playing in *The Antelope* at the Waldorf Theatre. This complicated matters and kept her busy rehearsing all day and appearing at night at the Waldorf. The Waldorf engagement ended on Saturday, December 19, 1908, so she

was free to travel with the other members of *The Dollar Princess* company to Manchester on the following day. She was a fine artiste, having first appeared on the stage in 1902 at the Apollo Theatre in *The Girl from Kays*.

The big opportunities which come to those engaged in the entertainment of audiences are sometimes lost, but that could not be said of the chance presented to Robert Michaelis, the handsome young vocalist actor, who was the hero of *The Dollar Princess*. He played on tour in *Veronique*, *A Country Girl*, *Three Little Maids*, *The Belle of New York*, etc., but he never loomed so large on the dramatic horizon as he did in *The Dollar Princess*. Stardom brought out all his talents, and at one bound he leapt to a premier place in the ranks of vocalist-actors.

Gifted with a beautiful voice and a fine appearance, Michaelis had no near rival and he was, in fact, a second Hayden Coffin. He had had good apprenticeship, for apart from his provincial experience he toured the States, travelling over 20,000 miles in one season, and before he became the hero of *The Dollar Princess*, he played Prince Danilo in *The Merry Widow* at Daly's Theatre for four months. Michaelis was born in St. Petersburg, educated at Dulwich College and Paris, and studied singing in the French capital. He married Phyllis le Grand, one of Daly's *Merry Widows*, who eventually made a big hit as Angele Didier in *The Count of Luxembourg* on tour. He later toured with this company in the title rôle.

Richard Golden—not to be confused with Richard Goolden—an American comedian, who appeared in the leading comedy part in *The Dollar Princess*, in Manchester, once played in pantomime there in the late 'eighties. Something happened on the last night of *The Dollar Princess* at the Prince's, Manchester, which led to a cancellation of his contract with George Edwardes, and he did not proceed with the company to Edinburgh and elsewhere, his part being taken by his understudy, Fred Winn, at very short notice. So Richard Golden's first engagement with George Edwardes came to an abrupt end.

A. M. Willner, one of the authors of *The Dollar Princess*, a Doctor of Law, was also a composer of sufficient standing in Vienna to have had several of his works produced at the Imperial Opera House. In the late 'eighties Brahms advised him to write the libretto of a comic-opera with a story founded on *The Taming of the Shrew*, and suggested that he should call it *The Golden Fairy*. After a long interval and a long journey from the original suggestion, *The Dollar Princess* made its appearance. There still remained a slight likeness to the *Taming of the Shrew* in *The Dollar Princess*, which tells of a wealthy American

girl who at length finds a man who differs from all others because he will not obey her. Finally, he tames the high-spirited heiress and marries her.

Leo Fall, the composer, conducted the initial performance of *The Dollar Princess* at the Prince's, Manchester, and George Edwardes personally directed the rehearsals, the stage manager being A. E. Dodson.

Before the production, the Guv'nor said in an interview with the *Manchester Evening Chronicle* :

"It is in presenting a play that the English theatre can out-rival the Continent. Take for instance, *The Merry Widow*. As put before a Viennese audience the play would not be recognised in England, the presentation in this country was so much superior. I saw the play in Vienna, and I thought that there was something in it. I saw *The Dollar Princess*, bought it, altered it, and am now producing it.

"England," added Mr. Edwardes, "is the home of musical comedy. Plays like *The Geisha*, *San Toy*, and *A Country Girl*, which have long been withdrawn from Daly's, are still attractions at the principal theatres in Germany, and, for that matter, all over the civilised world—especially in the colonies.

"The sense of beauty and prettiness is developed on the English stage in a far larger degree than in Continental theatres. Musical comedy is costly to the stage. In *The Dollar Princess*, at the Prince's, Manchester, for instance, two members of the company are getting £100 a week, several £60 and others £40 and £50."

As a profession, Edwardes thought musical comedy presented a splendid opening for girls with ability "and other corresponding attributes. Many of the principals of my companies are girls who have graduated from the chorus in my productions."

Hilda Moody, who appeared in the title rôle of the Manchester *Dollar Princess*, completed her musical education in Brussels, and made her first appearance in London in *A Greek Slave*. She then played in *San Toy* and *Three Little Maids*, in which piece she created the well-known song composed by Paul Rubens, "The Miller's Daughter." Needless to say, *The Dollar Princess* played to capacity business during its six weeks' season at the Prince's, Manchester.

I was in charge of the publicity for *The Dollar Princess* there and elsewhere, so perhaps I may be permitted to quote what my old friend, W. Buchanan-Taylor, then dramatic critic of the *Sunday Chronicle*, wrote in that paper of December 20, 1908:

"So much has been said and written about *The Dollar Princess* that

a daily bulletin might be issued to the public concerning the latest developments."

By the time *The Dollar Princess* arrived at her London home, Daly's on September 25, 1909, she had been transformed. A new comedy part, Bulger (Confidential clerk to Conder) was specially added for W. H. Berry, and Phineas Q. Conder became Harry Q. Conder, Alice's brother. The Daly's production was by Edward Royce, son of E. W. Royce of the Old Gaiety Theatre fame, and the cast included Robert Michaelis, W. H. Berry (Bulger), Evelyn Beerbohm (Dick), Basis S. Foster (John, Earl of Quorn), Willie Warde, Joseph Coyne (Harry Q. Conder, a multi-millionaire), Emmy Wehlen (Olga, A Lion Queen), Gabrielle Ray (Daisy, cousin to Conder), and Lily Elsie as Alice (Conder's sister). Gladys Cooper appeared in the small part of Sadie von Tromp.

A first night at Daly's had physiognomy of its own and it had its own public. Both could be discerned by the observant when the curtain rose on the brilliant opening scene at the first performance of *The Dollar Princess*. In the stalls and boxes every section of society was represented. Duchesses and queens of musical comedy, great lights of literature and City magnates—in fact, all the world was in Daly's that night. The occupants of the pit looked weary but eager. And no wonder—seeing that some had spent an all-night vigil in their anxiety to secure seats. So large was the crowd that it was found necessary to open the doors in the middle of the afternoon. For these early comers the fun began as soon as the audience started to arrive, for every well-known personage was greeted with cheers and applause.

To quote the *Daily Mail* notice of September 27, 1909 :

"Delightful music, a real musical comedy, a beautiful spectacle—such was *The Dollar Princess*, which then and there on Saturday night earned a rapturous and merited ovation. Intrinsically and extrinsically the thing is good. It is a great advance on similar productions of the past. A playlet, it has enough soul to make it a comedy. A comedy, it has been set to music which is positively an interpretation so that the music, as in the operettes of Sullivan, Strauss and Offenbach is essentially and triumphantly the thing. All that dollars can do they have done for the mounting, scenery, and costumes. There is a new tripartite waltz which will require some learning if it is to become a ball-room favourite, but the whole it is a great acquisition, really a delightful musical comedietta, in which all concerned, and notably the composers, acquire merit and unstinted congratulations."

The story of *The Dollar Princess* was much altered from the original before Edwardes produced it in Manchester ; and for Daly's it was

remodelled again and a new third act added. The plot is simple enough, but it had the merit of being original, and apart from the love-making of Alice Conder, the "Dollar Princess" and Freddy Fairfax, the spirit of levity was always uppermost, and many surprisingly funny and whimsical situations were evolved.

The piece was beautifully staged. The imposing grandeur of Conder's mansion in the first act (Alfred Terraine); the Garden Court, with refreshing tone colours of the second (Joseph Harker); and the tropical effect of the third act, Freddy's Bungalow, California (Alfred Terraine); each of these sets was an artistic triumph. To quote the *Daily Mail* again :

"There is much to delight in, but, quite particularly, the music, which, as before said, is interpretive, melodious, graceful, delicate and insinuating. The *leit motif* is charming. It is never common-place, and it is coloured all through with that sense of dance rhythm and airy charm which hails from the countries of the Danube."

Joseph Coyne made a big hit as Conder, a comic part specially written for him. Joe used to live at the Carlton Hotel. Once when returning there, wearing a cap and sweater and going up in the lift, the liftman (who always called him "My lord"), said to the surprise of two very respectable Americans : "Oh, your lordship, her ladyship asked me to tell you that she was round at Ciro's having a cocktail with the Prince of Wales. Will you join her?" The Americans pricked up their ears. When Joe got out at his floor, the American turned to his wife and said : "Say, honey. If that guy's a lord, there's a chance for me!" This story was originally told by Hannen Swaffer.

In *The Quaker Girl*, a jealous lady used to say to Joseph Coyne fiercely : "I saw you raise your hat to that girl—you don't know her." Joe would answer meekly : "Nope," and retired squashed to a frizzle. Well, one night, Joe thought he'd stand up for a change, so when the lady made her stock remark : "I saw you raise your hat to that girl you don't know her." Joe replied : "No, but my brother knows her and this is his hat."

The Dollar Princess was Edward Royce's first production at Daly's, where later he produced many of George Edwardes' well-known pieces, including *The Count of Luxembourg*, *A Waltz Dream*, *Gipsy Love*, *Betty*, *The Marriage Market*, and *A Country Girl* (revival). Royce produced the original production of *Irene* in New York, and he was also responsible for four productions of the world famous *Ziegfeld Follies*. He is the son of a famous father, the late E. W. Royce, who was celebrated as a dancer and comedian at the old Gaiety Theatre, in the days of burlesque, together with Edward

Terry, Nellie Farren and Kate Vaughan.

On Thursday afternoon, December 16, 1909, George Edwardes gave a special performance of *The Dollar Princess*, presented by his No. 1 Touring Company, a novel experiment. In describing the performance, I cannot do better than quote *The Referee* notice:—

“At Daly’s Theatre last Thursday afternoon, Mr. George Edwardes gave a public rehearsal of his new Northern touring company, which is to start its provincial proceedings with *The Dollar Princess*, at the King’s Theatre, Glasgow, to-morrow evening.

“There was a crowded audience, including all the principals and chorus of the present company at Daly’s. These artists regarded the performance with the deepest interest, and it may be—“not to speak it profanely,” as Hamlet says—that even certain of these London principals would not be above “learning a bit” from some members of the North company. Of course, the wildest of wild horses would not be able to drag from me the names of those Daly’s players who might thus profit. For the time being I am out for describing how these touring players fared on their own account.

“Well, then, *imprimis*, to start with, or to begin at the beginning, Miss Lily Elsie’s character, the name-part, was played by Miss Clara Evelyn, whose singing of that heroine’s often difficult, but mostly effective music was a sheer delight to the ear, as her presence was to the eye. The only fault I have to find with this new Dollar Princess is that she is given to stoop. If she will take the advice that young stage-players used to be given in the days that were, earlier, and keep her eyes raised to the dress circle, she will soon get rid of that stoop. Mr. Louis Bradfield, as the multi-millionaire, Conder, did not seek to emulate the quaint method of Mr. Joseph Coyne, but he sang finely throughout (Joseph, you know, does not sing as a rule; he “speaks through music”). Mr. Leonard Mackay as the sometime poor aristocrat hero might be said to have run a vocal dead-heat with the London representative, Mr. Michaelis. If Mr. Eric Thorne as Bulger lacked the quaint unctuousness of Mr. W. H. Berry, his broader method undoubtedly is just the thing for the suburbs and the provinces. Miss Mabel Russell, as the second and droller heroine, was (a “little dear”). There is no more fitting description. Since her acting in *The Little Michus* she has done nothing better. If her dancing may (I say may) lacks the finish that marks the caste of Gabrielle Ray, Miss Russell certainly acted the part far better. Excellent service was also rendered by Miss Norma Whalley as the Lion Queen (a delightful impersonation). Mr. Paul Plunket as the aristocratic groom, Mr. Percy Davison as the dancing footman, Sir James, and Mr.

Howard Cridland as Dick. The production again directed by Mr. Edward Royce, is an exact replica of the beautiful and sumptuous one at Daly's."

This same idea of presenting a special matinée of a touring company in London was originated by Henry Lowenfeld, when he gave a special performance of *La Poupée* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre before starting on a provincial tour. On that occasion Eric Thorne, who as already stated appeared in *The Dollar Princess* matinée at Daly's, played the leading comedy part of Hilarius, the doll maker, originated by Willie Edouin. Thorne was a great favourite in the provinces. He made a big hit on tour in George Graves' part of Baron Popoff in *The Merry Widow*.

He at one time understudied Arthur Roberts at The Prince of Wales Theatre and appeared in Arthur's (title) rôle in *Gentleman Joe*. I saw Eric in the part, and his rendering was immense. Eric Thorne was certainly a great comedian.

Leonard Mackay told me that next to his part in *The Dollar Princess*, the role of the Gipsy Musician, Jozsi, in *Gipsy Love*, was his favourite part. He was associated with George Edwardes' productions for over 15 years, beginning as a member of the chorus in *A Greek Slave*. Leonard Mackay was rehearsing to take part in his first picture when he suddenly died. I think his last stage success was in *Rose Marie* at Drury Lane, and he was in *The Lady of the Rose* at Daly's. He made a big success as Danilo in *The Merry Widow* on tour.

It is a long step from a theatre box-office in Clapham to the front rank of musical comedy stars, and from thence to the dignified atmosphere of the House of Commons as England's first actress M.P. Yet this is the story of dainty Mabel Russell. She was employed for a time in the box office of the Shakespeare Theatre, Clapham, and it was there that she got the chance which was to change the whole course of her life, and lead her to fame and fortune. One day, while carrying out her duties at the theatre, she heard that one of the pantomime artists who was appearing there had been taken ill. The management were at their wits end to know what to do, when somebody suggested that the girl in the box-office knew all the songs which this artist sang in the show, and what was more, she had a very good voice. There was a hurried call for rehearsal and the astonished Mabel was whisked away from her seat in the box-office and "tried out." The result was a tremendous success and the charming girl, who was so soon to become a "star," filled the bill until the return of the sick artiste.

On such small things do lives sometimes hang. Had Mabel Russell

not been employed in a box-office, she might never have been heard of, for from that first experience of the footlights stage ambition awoke. She obtained a job in the chorus at the Gaiety Theatre in George Edwardes' production of *Havana*. She worked hard and greatly impressed the management. After leaving the Gaiety, Mabel Russell went to Daly's Theatre, and appeared in *A Country Girl*, and when this musical play was revived in 1914, she appeared on tour as Nan (Evie Greene's original part).

She also appeared in several of George Edwardes' musical comedies on tour and in London. Sir Herbert Tree persuaded her to take a part in *Within the Law* at the Haymarket Theatre in 1913, where, as a Cockney criminal girl, she added still further laurels to her reputation as an actress.

Mabel Russell's first husband was Stanley Rhodes, nephew of Cecil Rhodes, who was killed in a motor accident at Brooklands in 1911. She was in the car at the time and was badly injured. In June, 1917, when she was appearing with Sir Gerald du Maurier in *London Pride* at Wyndham's Theatre, she married Captain Philipson on his return from France. She then retired from the stage for a time, but returned to it in 1927 when she appeared in a musical version of W. J. Locke's novel *The Beloved Vagabond* at the Duke of York's Theatre.

CHAPTER XI.

A MASTER OF STAGECRAFT.

NO history of Daly's Theatre would be complete without a special mention of the late Joseph Harker, who was responsible for many of the sets of the most successful musical plays staged there.

The name Harker occupies a big niche in the British theatre. Joseph's mother was, before her marriage, the well-known actress, Maria O'Connor. Joseph's son, Gordon Harker, is a famous contemporary representative of the family.

Joseph, a Manchester man, was a master of theatre craft in all its phases. His mother used to tell him that he made his debut on the stage as an infant, and throughout his long and active life he maintained a fiery enthusiasm for his art.

Theatrical managers, confronted with unusual problems, often consulted Harker for advice which was always given tersely, wittily and with an unerring eye for practical facts. But he was no mere technician. He knew the human side of the theatre from the seamy to the glamorous, but in him the pathetic was never far from laughter. As a boy he toured Ireland with the Dublin and Belfast Touring Company, "doubling" several parts, as well as taking the money, scrubbing down the stage and bill-posting. For obvious reasons the Company called themselves "The Doubling and Stickfast Company."

Ultimately, Joseph Harker became the greatest scene painter of his generation. Sir Henry Irving, who had an eye for outstanding ability, encouraged and helped him to start his own business. Harker was a lovable character. Only one matter ruffled his temper—the ultra-modern, highbrow school of scene painters who, according to Harker, were ignorant of the rudiments of their job and tried to cover up their ignorance with a lot of abstract theory. He used to declare that scene painting is not simple, that it was in the fullest sense an art, and that painting is painting whatever the size of the canvas.

A scenic artist must not only be a good draughtsman and have a sense of colour, he must also have a deep knowledge of stage technique and a power to visualise the whole set from the audience's point of view, while working on one piece of it. Many famous artists have designed and painted stage scenes and several Royal Academicians have graduated from the theatre paint room.

Harker produced many masterpieces of the theatrical painter's art, among them scenes for Irving's Lyceum productions and Sir Herbert Tree's great Shakespearean spectacles at His Majesty's theatre. His skill in design and feeling for opulent colour were perhaps displayed to the best advantage in Oriental sets. His Daly productions certainly played a part in George Edwardes' run of successes.

We have seen that *The Dollar Princess* made a strong bid to head the long list of these ; but it fell short of *The Merry Widow*, and on May 20, 1911, George Edwardes produced *The Count of Luxembourg* at Daly's—a musical play adapted from the Hungarian by Basil Hood, with music by Franz Lehar.

Never, surely, was a musical play launched under more favourable conditions. Their Majesties King George and Queen Mary were present at the première at which Lehar conducted. They arrived at the special Royal entrance at two minutes to eight, and were at once conducted to the box prepared for them, on the left side of the dress circle, two boxes having been made into one.

Hand-painted programmes were provided for the King and Queen. His Majesty, wearing a white carnation in his dress-coat, sat in the centre of the box with the Queen on his right. All the reserved seats might have been sold twice over. Crowds began to gather outside the pit and gallery at 6 a.m., and the doors were opened at 5 p.m. The management provided afternoon tea for the ladies, and a Pathephone concert to bridge the interval before the orchestra arrived. A thousand people were turned away from the pit entrance after every corner had been filled.

Changes had been made since the piece was first produced in Vienna. In the Daly's version, the first act is laid in Paris during carnival time and in Brissard's studio ; and the second takes place in the reception hall at the Grand Duke Rutzinov's house in Paris. The story departs from the old Daly's formula in that the lovers do not quarrel in the opening scene and spend the evening in making it up. They meet, but do not come to a misunderstanding until the second act, in which their reconciliation makes an agreeable finale. Not only are they strangers for so long, but they are actually married without knowing each other. Count René of Luxembourg (Bertram Wallis), as poor as he is handsome, is an artist in Paris, sharing his life in the Quartier Latin with an amusing pal of humble birth, Brissard (W. H. Berry). This character was not in the original version, but was specially written for Berry. It is in the midst of gay preparations for a carnival that the Count succumbs to the tempting offer of £20,000 if he will make a certain opera singer, Angèle Didier (Lily Elsie) his wife, though

only in name. This is because a doting old Grand Duke (Huntley Wright), who wants to marry her himself, is debarred from doing so by court etiquette which forbids him from marrying anybody under the rank of Countess. So it is that we have a screen marriage, a wedding without the parties seeing each other, and afterwards divorce in the air according to the agreement. But things are not destined to end so simply. At the grand reception in the Duke's house in Paris, the day before his arranged marriage, the Count and Countess meet. He has learned to love her from the stalls, although neither knows the other; but this encounter at the Duke's reception somehow leads to a clarification of their positions. There is angry and amorous protest; complication arises from the fact that the plain and lowly Brissard has been introduced as the husband of the screen marriage; there is fun and there are tender passages and charm to the last curtain.

The cast also included Fred Kaye as the Registrar, Willie Warde as a waiter, Alec Fraser as Mons de Trésac, Paul Plunket as Mons. De Valmont, May de Sousa (Juliette), Gladys Homfrey (Countess Kokozeff), May Marton (Mimi), Kitty Hanson (Lisette), Gladys Guy (Fleurette), May Hobson (Amelie), Gertrude Glyn (Rosalie), Madeline Seymour (Coralie), Margot Erskine (Sidonie), Doris Stocker (Babette) May Leslie Stuart (daughter of Leslie Stuart) as Jacqueline, Beatrice Von Brunner (Therese), and the dancers were Beatrice Collier and Oy-Ra. Production was by Edward Royce.

Of the music, one of the most exacting London critics wrote: "There never has been such a bright merry and unflagging musical comedy. Franz Lehar's music is so clever and resourceful that it should be held up as a pattern for other musical comedies. The composer knows how to make the very utmost of his invention. By clever orchestration he has given an original twist to music which is not perhaps as highly original as it sounds. There is many a number in *The Count of Luxembourg* which Sullivan would not have refused to acknowledge."

Lehar composed *The Count of Luxembourg* in two months, which is a fair average; but that is apart from the orchestration, which is quite as long a business as the work of composing. When George Edwardes was rehearsing *The Merry Widow* at Daly's, he went to Lehar with the request that he should write two special numbers, adding that they must be delivered at once. Lehar left the theatre with his English representative. It was raining heavily. At his instigation they sought the hospitality of a cab shelter in the Haymarket, and then and there he wrote two songs.



Above—The German
actress
EMMY WEHLEN

Below
CLARA EVELYN



TWO FAMOUS "WIDOWS"

below
HUNTLEY WRIGHT
as Calicot in
Madame Pompadour.



above
W. H. BERRY



FRANZ LEHAR

Shortly after the first performance of *The Count of Luxembourg* the Guv'nor gave a reception to Lehar. Appropriately enough, it took place in the hall of the Grand Duke Rutzinov's palatial mansion, or, if we must descend to unromantic fact, to the stage at Daly's Theatre. There, between three and five in the afternoon, those twinkling stars who nightly illuminated the theatrical firmament, shone and took tea and champagne-cup. Other celebrities—musical, journalistic and social—lent importance to the occasion and testified to the popularity of the Viennese composer.

To the congratulating admirers he turned a smiling face, apparently anxious to talk on any subject under the sun save that of his own success. His modesty, however, could not quite conceal the thrill of pleasure he got from the occasion. Probably Lehar had never crowded so much hand-shaking into two short hours.

Fortunately, George Edwardes stood near ready to assist him in receiving the army of well-wishers. At every turn one recognised a well-known face. Meanwhile the orchestra played sweet music, including the haunting "staircase-waltz." About five o'clock Lehar asked permission to deliver a speech. Advancing to the footlights, he told the members of the orchestra how grateful he was to them for the splendid manner in which they had interpreted his music, and how delighted he was at having had the honour of personally conducting them.

Of the musical numbers in *The Count of Luxembourg*, I should like specially to mention the following: "Pierrette and Pierrot" (May de Sousa and W. H. Berry), "Cousins of the Czar" (Lily Elsie and Huntley Wright), "I am in Love" (Huntley Wright and attendants), "Hail Angèle our Nightingale," and male chorus at the opening of the second act, a delightful number, "Are you going to Dance?" (Bertram Wallis and Lily Elsie), in other words, the famous "Staircase Waltz"—a miracle of cleverness, "Golden Star" (Bertram Wallis and Lily Elsie), and "Rootsie-Pootsie" (Huntley Wright). In fact, the score is full of gems.

The "Staircase Waltz" was composed by Lehar in curious circumstances. He was walking in the woods near Ischl, when a delicious waltz idea came to him. The day was very hot, and on his collar, which he had taken off for comfort's sake, he jotted down the melody.

On March 9, 1912, a new edition of *The Count of Luxembourg* was presented at Daly's Theatre, Daisie Irving succeeding Lily Elsie as Angèle, Lionel Victor relieving Huntley Wright as the Grand Duke Rutzinov, and Gladys Guy taking up the part of Juliette.

Daisie Irving quickly sang and acted herself into the hearts of Daly's audiences. She sang the part with great charm, and cultivated the valuable quality of clear enunciation. Her personal appeal, too, was unquestionable. Dorma Leigh partnered Oy-Ra (the dancer) in place of Beatrice Collier, and their acrobatic dancing was a big success. A new opening chorus to the second act was introduced.

An amusing incident befel Daisie Irving while she was appearing in *The Count of Luxembourg* at Blackpool. She was on the top of a tram with a friend when the car came to a terminus, and she got ready to alight. "There's Daisie Irving" said several voices, and she beheld a crowd gazing up at her from the roadway. The gaze and the crowd increased as she went down the steps amid a profound silence. There was an audible murmur of disappointment when Miss Irving reached the road and they walked away. "I do believe," said her friend, "that they expected you to do the waltz down the steps."

On one occasion Bertram Wallis and Miss Irving were doing the staircase dance when Wallis fell, and, of course, Daisie Irving had to go too. It was so funny that they both burst out laughing, and in a moment the house was convulsed. Miss Irving told me that she had never heard such a roar of merriment in her life. They were called on again and again, and Miss Irving said: "I think everyone expected we would repeat the fall."

CHAPTER XII.

A LOVING CUP FOR THE GUV'NOR.

GEORGE EDWARDES' twenty-five years as a manager was celebrated by a banquet at the Savoy Hotel, which included the presentation of a gold cup. The affair took place on Sunday, November 26, 1911, and the company numbered about 180 persons, representing the highest and best traditions of the stage. Managers, actor-managers, actors, dramatists, critics and famous theatre patrons were there. The chairman, Sir Herbert Tree, and the vice-chairman, Sir George Alexander, began their careers, like Edwardes, outside the theatre, and were gradually drawn to it by circumstances as well as inclination and aptitude.

Management—joint or sole—had occupied the Guv'nor since he joined D'Oyly Carte at the Opera Comique in 1875. Later, of course, he became acting manager at the Savoy Theatre. His sole management began at the old Gaiety in 1886, when he introduced *Dorothy* to the London public. This is a record which gave him a unique position even in such a company as those who attended the Savoy banquet. Most of the pieces which Edwardes produced, either alone or in association with Charles Frohman, Frank Curzon and others at the Gaiety, the Prince of Wales, the Lyric, Apollo and Daly's had been toured by him in America, South Africa and Australia, and among the guests were several visitors from distant parts anxious to pay tribute to the Guv'nor's fame.

After the loyal toast had been honoured, the chairman, in proposing the toast of "Our Guest" said: "You will, I am sure, be relieved to hear that I am not going to weary you with a long speech. Our guest said to me: "Get it over quick, and put me out of my suffering," so I will make my speech like the hangman's rope, short and sweet, and give the subject a short drop. In this suspense I know how terribly nervous George Edwardes has been; but then modesty is one of the most charming accomplishments of this many-sided man. We are now met here to-night to congratulate our friend on his happy record of twenty-five years' management, and to rejoice with him in his prosperity, a prosperity which we are ready to share with him to a man. But prosperity alone could not bring together the assembly of men who are sitting round these tables to-night. It is the man no less than the manager; it is perhaps rather the man than the manager that we regard.

“George Edwardes was predestined by fate to be successful, and by character he was predestined to shed the rays of his success on others and to make them happy. He is a man, I believe, who would have won success in any walk or any turf of life. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Had he not been a manager of many theatres he might have been a barrister. I can imagine he would have cajoled a jury with his persuasive accents. Had he been a dentist, how painless would have been his extractions—which, by the way, is Irish. I believe it would have amounted almost to an anaesthetic, if not an aesthetic, pleasure to be drawn by George Edwardes. The back numbers of the *Illustrated London News* in his waiting room would have been thumb-marked by Duchesses.

“Again, had he been a doctor, my lords and gentlemen, what a bedside manner; as a spiritual consoler, what the stage has gained the church lost. I can imagine that had he been the head of a fashionable church in the West End, his flock would certainly have been waiting outside the doors from an early hour, and his pink optimism would have been so wide in its appeal that I verily believe it would have depleted the exchequer of Daly’s box-office. As a General—well, he who can run three theatres and manage three choruses and a corps de ballet, to him the command of an army corps would be but as a pleasant hobby. I know what it is to manage one theatre; what must it be to manage three? And this is what our guest has done for many years with unwavering energy and almost unvarying success. Apart from this he is interested in countless tours. How large, then, is his control, and how many there are to be grateful to him for their daily bread.

“George Edwardes has given to gaiety all the adjuncts of beauty on which he could lay his hands—beauty of scenery, beauty of dancing and music, as well as beauty of limb. To succeed thus, one must be made, not of iron, but of steel. Iron breaks; steel bends, and in bending conquers. This strength is no less essential in adversity than in prosperity; indeed, adversity is the greater test of character, and Edwardes has stood its test with calmness, for he, too, has not escaped Fate’s mild reproof. I always think that nothing is so conducive to self-esteem as adversity. An old lady once said: “It is success that makes one modest.” What a modest man our guest must be to-night. What greater compliment could any man ask than that which is so spontaneously given to our friend to-night? True, he has won on the Turf where he is no less popular than on the stage—the Ascot Gold Cup. To-night, he wins in the human race yet another gold cup. Here it is.

“ My dear Edwardes. In asking you to accept this cup we wish you many many sunshine days, and many years to shed your genial rays on those among whom your life is passed. And in those years to come, whether happiness or in sorrow, you will, I am sure, prize none of your many possessions higher than this, for no man can have a more precious possession than that which we have bestowed upon you to-night—this loving-cup of friendship.”

George Edwardes said in reply : “ I am, believe me, deeply sensible to the compliments, the honour you offer me this evening. I consider myself fortunate very much beyond my deserts to have the esteem, the sympathy, the goodwill of such a gathering. I feel a proud man, and yet a very humble one in the presence of such a distinguished company, among whom I am flattered to see so many representatives of the calling with which I have been associated all these long years. While your illustrious chairman has been making history in the theatre, alike as an actor and as a manager, whose achievements in either capacity are assured a permanent place in the annals of the stage, I have been content to be making a living in the theatre. An honest living, I hope. I hope so, I say, but I am not so sure that everybody will allow me even the credit for that ; and I will tell you why. If I have sometimes felt more than a little elated when I have found myself praised immoderately in the newspapers—of which, I don’t mind telling you, I am a diligent reader—praised for certain changes—and I hope I may say, improvements—which I have tried to introduce into the ‘ play with music,’ my vanity, I can assure you, is rudely chastened every now and then when a sterner critic than the rest tells me bluntly that I have all this time been doing my best—or my worst—to destroy the British theatre. If the energies and activities I have given to the theatre have not been misspent, if I have cultivated my own little patch in the world of the theatre to some use and advantage, then I am satisfied. I have attempted nothing more, nothing less. I hope I may say for this Cinderella of the drama that it is a little better cared for, better housed, more considerably treated, better dressed than it used to be in the old days.

“ I know there are a great number of people to whom the class of entertainment that I provide does not appeal, and there are also serious-minded people who will have it that it is the only function of the theatre to improve our minds. That is not my philosophy. If I may quote Shakespeare for my own ends, my ‘ true intent is all for your delight.’ No one has a greater admiration than I for the work accomplished by our leading theatrical managers, by Sir Herbert Tree, who has for years been doing single-handed the work of a

national theatre, by Sir George Alexander, who has done so much for English comedy and English authors, and with such conspicuous success, by Sir Charles Wyndham, the incomparable, and by other gentlemen too numerous to mention, whom I see here to-night. I appreciate the value of their work, and I know something of their difficulties, too. For I have been tempted from time to time to invade the territories of drama and comedy, and I do not mind telling you frankly that whenever I have done so, I have always made haste to beat a retreat—a retreat sometimes with heavy losses. I think I may say, without the least fear of contradiction, that I hold the record for having produced more failures in comedy than any other English manager, alive or dead.

“It is sometimes asked what has the musical play done for the art of the theatre. I think I may fairly reply it has done something, for I am surprised when I look round and see how many actors and actresses who have graduated under my management have since taken honours in the ‘higher schools’ of the drama. Between you and me, I don’t quite like the way Sir George Alexander and Mr. Charles Hawtrey have lately been recruiting their companies with my pretty girls.

“Only the other day, my friend Mr. Cyril Maude put temptation once more in my way with the alluring offer of a comedy. But I rejected his blandishments, and wired him: ‘No more comedies for me, thank you.’ Now that I have mended my ways, I think it is a little hard on me to find that I am faced with such a formidable rival as Sir Herbert Tree who, as everybody already knows, is shortly about to produce a musical play called *Orpheus aux Enfers* — ‘aux Enfers’ I notice, being most politely rendered into English as *In The Underground*.

“To you, Sir Herbert Tree, I am indeed grateful for the signal compliment you have paid in presiding at this dinner. To Mr. Arthur Bouchier and Mr. J. D. Langton, the Hon. Secretaries, who have done so much and you, gentlemen, one and all, who have done me the honour to come here I feel myself greatly indebted for an evening which you have made memorable for me. It has been worth waiting twenty-five years for.”

Sir George Alexander said: “I am sure you will all agree that the success of this evening would be incomplete if we did not express our appreciation of the efforts of our chairman to-night, and thank him for this opportunity of doing honour to the guest of the evening. If you will allow me, I will address Sir Herbert Tree through a quotation of the works of the late Mr. Colley Cibber with slight alterations made

for the occasion by a modern actor manager, who is accustomed to tamper with masterpieces. ‘ ’Tis not the lustre of your public merit, the affluence of your fortune, your high figure in life, nor those honourable distinctions which you had rather deserve than be told of, that have so many years made our plain hearts hang after for. These are but incidental ornaments that, ’tis true, may be of service to you, in the world’s opinion, and we rejoice that Providence has so deservedly bestowed them. Yet our particular attachment has risen from a more natural and more engaging charm—*The agreeable companion*.’ Now we all know that Sir Herbert Tree is renowned for his versatility, I myself not very long ago had a very remarkable experience of this. I had laboured in collaboration with Mr. Dion Boucicault, to make a success of my costumes in the part of Alfred Evelyn, and I thought I stood a very good chance as a comedian against Sir Herbert Tree, but he was equal with me, because he took a mean advantage of me during the last act by exposing a beautiful green waistcoat, which would be the envy of any leading man. Still, I have forgotten that, and I am the first to acknowledge that, at any rate, he is the most agreeable of companions, and to-night, I am sure you will join me in the belief that he makes the most ideal chairman. Therefore, I am sure it is the wish of everyone present that he may long be spared to follow his career as a splendid actor, as a marvellous manager of a beautiful theatre, and that he will long continue to do useful work as a public man.” The toast was heartily drunk.

Sir Herbert Tree, replying, said with reference to the performance mentioned by Sir George Alexander, he did not wish to filch a spurious success. Sir George had attributed his success mainly to a green waistcoat, but he wished to make a clean breast of it. His real success was due to another garment, a nether garment. It was that which produced the culminating feature of the performance. His real triumph came in the love-scene with Lady Franklin and the dance which succeeded it, when the breeches supplied to him by the management split right across at the supreme moment. There was an enormous roar of laughter, which he thought was due to his acting, but which he discovered afterwards was due to this incident.

After the speeches, the evening was devoted to music. Among the artists were W. H. Squire, Tivadar Nachez, and Sir Charles Santley, who, then 77 years of age, sang Tosti’s “Dear Heart,” “To Anthea,” and “Simon the Cellarer.” I am indebted to the *Daily Telegraph* (now the *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*) for the particulars of this great function.

On June 1, 1912, George Edwardes produced at Daly's *Gipsy Love*, a new musical play by A. M. Willner and Robert Bodanzky, English libretto by Basil Hood, lyrics by Adrian Ross, with music by Franz Lehar.

Interviewed before the production, the Guv'nor said: "I am just back from Paris, where I have been to confer with Lehar about the play. *Gipsy Love* is undoubtedly his masterpiece. The subject appeals to him, and he pours out his temperament in the music. It is full of luscious melody. It soars into opera, and there is a magical waltz in the second act.

"As a rule, you know, Lehar will interpolate nothing. When he has written his score the piece has to be produced as it stands. Not so with *Gipsy Love*. He has written me many new numbers, and the score, I fancy, will take us by storm. The piece will be an entirely new one. The dream business is all gone. Originally, the first and third acts were reality. The second was dreamland. Captain Basil Hood has written me an entirely new book. The first act is laid in the garden of a Roumanian noble's palace. The second takes us to a wine-shop. The third is the Summer Hall of a Roumanian Grandee, the work of Joseph Harker.

"Where do I expect to get my greatest effects? In the second act. This is full of the joyous tumultuous life of a gipsydom redolent of Carmen and José. Here, in this wine-shop, we get the incursion of the gipsy horde, and it is here that Harry Dearth, whom I have specially engaged for the part of the wine-keeper, will get his great chances—'mine host,' with song rallying the crowd and carrying them to victory. At the moment, you know, he is appearing as St. George in Sir Edward Elgar's masque. It will be his first appearance under my flag, and I have secured him for years to come. Sari Petrass is my big engagement for *Gipsy Love*. She is essentially a personality that fascinates you at once. She is not a great singer, but her phrasing is perfect. She speaks English well. She is quiet, demure, an Edna May with differences, an actress who plays, as the French say, 'with intention.' That is Petrass."

The Daly's cast of *Gipsy Love* was Jozsi (A Gipsy Musician), Robert Michaelis; Andor (An Innkeeper), Harry Dearth; Jonel (betrothed to Ilona), Webster Millar; Kajetan (a shy young man), Lauri de Frece; Dimitreauv (Kajetan's father), Fred Kaye; Dragotin (A Roumanian Noble), W. H. Berry; Ilona (Dragotin's daughter), Sari Petrass; Julesa (Ilona's nurse), Rosina Filippi; Jolan (Dragotin's niece), Mabel Russell; Zorika (A Gipsy girl), Madeline Seymour; Marischaka (Andor's daughter), Kate Welch; and Lady Babby (an English lady),

Gertie Millar; the dancers were Dorma Leigh and Oy-Ra. The production was by Edward Royce.

It is interesting to note that one of three attendants to Lady Babby was played by the now well-known actor, Nicholas Hannen, also understudy to W. H. Berry, who, by the way, had his usual topical song entitled "Home again," words by Adrian Ross, music by Lionel Monckton. The title *Gipsy Love* epitomises the plot. Jozsi, a gipsy musician with a heart as fickle as it is false, becomes enamoured of Ilona, the winsome if capricious young daughter of Dragotin, a Roumanian noble. The foolish girl, dissembling her love for Jonel, a dashing young soldier to whom she was to be betrothed, elopes with the Romany. The flight of the couple is discovered in time to enable them to be traced by Ilona's father to a wine-shop resort of the Gipsies. Before the irate parent, however, reaches the end of the trail, the girl has had cause to repent the outcome of her escapade, for her sensitive soul is offended by the vulgarities of Joszi and his friends. Luckily for her, Lady Babby, a friend of Dragotin, a woman of the world, well versed in the arts of coquetry, hastens to Ilona's aid, succeeds by a ruse in capturing the unstable affections of Jozsi, and thus gives the foolish girl the opportunity of escaping from the perilous consequences of a gipsy marriage.

Gipsy Love was originally produced in Munich. Of the delightful music *The Daily Telegraph* critic wrote:—

"London had already heard something of the musical graces of 'Zigeuner-Liebe,' and so one went to Daly's on Saturday night prepared once again to fall under the spell of Mr. Lehar's fanciful inspiration. The genuine Lehar hall-mark is found on many a page of his melodious *Gipsy Love*, and in many a turn of phrase you will note the very Leharesque slow-waltz sung in the Finale to the first act by the gipsy Lothario—a thing of real charm, and all the better for not being obvious, which means that you will enjoy it the more every time you hear it. The languorous waltz melody sung by Jonel to Ilona in the moonlight, just before she elopes, is more obvious, but it has character as well as charm.

"The composer has rarely been more happily inspired than in the betrothal music, or, again, in Ilona's beautiful song, 'A Little Maiden,' with the Hungarian refrain in slow waltz rhythm. In the lighter vein of waltz-writing he gives us a captivating example in the dual refrains of the duet for Dragotin and Lady Babby, "You're in Love," and another extremely effective duet occurs in the scene in which Lady Babby bewitches the gipsy and leads up to a dance full of character, which hugely delighted Saturday's audience. So, too,

did the capital song of the innkeeper "Love and Wine," which suited Mr. Harry Dearth's fine voice admirably, and had to be repeated. Apart from the intrinsic value of his tunes, the music of the new piece can be listened to with delight by reason of the constant tokens of skill and fancy revealed by the composer in his rich and characteristic scoring."

CHAPTER XIII.

A REPLY TO THE CRITICS.

CAPTAIN BASIL HOOD, who wrote an entirely new book for *Gipsy Love* and who adapted other pieces, had a very clear conception of the art of musical comedy. He fiercely resented attacks made in the theatre by die-hard critics, and it is interesting to recall his dicta to-day.

"We are told," Hood once said, "by so-called artistic persons that musical comedy is an abomination of which the theatre must cleanse itself. These attacks are nearly always arrogant and frequently insolent, while the ignorance of those who make them is amazing.

"To begin with, what do they mean by musical comedy? There are so many grades of musical comedy that it is obviously unfair to bunch them together and speak of them as one and the same thing. There is as much difference between my first piece *Gentleman Joe*, and my latest *Gipsy Love*, as between chalk and cheese. It would be just as relevant as to take a Pinero comedy, a Sutro comedy, a Somerset Maugham comedy and a Houghton comedy, and group them in one class. Each of these has clearly marked and fundamental differences from the others.

"These same critics would admit comic opera into their scheme of things theatrical. But can any of them tell me where the demarcation between the comic opera and the musical comedy is drawn? I know what you will say; that in comic opera the story is told in the music. But is it? I could point to numerous examples in the famous Gilbert and Sullivan operas of interpolated songs, cleverly led up to and introduced, it is true, but songs which by no stretch of imagination could be described as plot songs. The business of writing the musical play is a distinct art in itself. And I am glad to think that in England the art is on a higher plane than on the Continent, or even in America. I am not saying this in any personal sense, but I take it as a great compliment to the English playwright that I should have been approached by a French composer to write the libretto of a musical play to be produced in Paris.

"Again, Lehar was so struck with my version of *Gipsy Love* that he asked me if I would be agreeable to it being translated into French and German for presentation on the Continent, in preference to the original version. There would, of course, be obvious difficulties in

the way of that, but the implied compliment was naturally very pleasing to me.

"You will understand from that that my adaptation of *Gipsy Love* is practically a new play. There are many things in the original that no English manager would put on the stage, and I did not like the root idea of Ilona's elopement with the gipsy being a dream. English audiences do not care for dream plays. They resent the discovery in the last scene that they have been spoofed. So I had to reconstruct the plot and most of the characters, always with an eye to the music which was there already, and had to be fitted somehow. That is the great difficulty of adaptation in this kind of work. It is really a more difficult business than writing a new play. Yet people frequently forget all about the poor author, and give the composer all the credit.

"The most courteous and charming man I ever worked with was Sir Arthur Sullivan. He was the embodiment of consideration. We were together in several works, such as *The Rose of Persia* and *The Emerald Isle*. The latter was left unfinished at Sir Arthur's death, and Sir Edward German completed the score. Sullivan and myself also commenced collaboration in a grand opera which, had it been finished, would have been on the same plane, musically, as *Ivanhoe*.

"In at least one respect Sir Arthur's ideas and mine coincided notably; that was with regard to the writing of lyrics in adaptation less congenial than in original work. The fitting of one's metre to ready-made music has a cramping effect, and stilted expression. I confess I prefer original work, and that is where Sir Arthur and I used to get along together so well. I preferred to write the lyrics first; he would not write a note of music until the lyrics were written. I used to read over my completed lyrics to him, and he would sit back in his chair with his eyes closed, listening intently, until he had the full sense of the required rhythm. Then he would set to work building up appropriate music to interpret the spirit of the verses."

Basil Hood's spirited defence of musical comedy was never adequately answered by hostile critics, and it still stands to-day, as the best description of this art. *Gipsy Love* demonstrated the truth of Hood's contention.

The production of *Gipsy Love* had the added interest of being Gertie Millar's (the Countess of Dudley) first appearance in a Daly's musical play.

Gertie Millar, who was married to the second Earl of Dudley in April, 1924, was born in Bradford in 1880, and made her first appearance on the stage at the age of 12 at the old St. James's Theatre, Manchester, as the girl babe in *Babes in the Wood*. Later, she joined

Arthur Brogden's famous Swiss choir, then one of the most popular and successful entertainments. It travelled Great Britain for over twenty years. Bradford was a most popular centre, and it was while performing at the Mechanics' Institute that Brogden engaged a pretty little girl as a juvenile member of his choir. Owing to her youth, he had her dressed specially for school songs. She wore a little bonnet and carried a bag and was taught to sing "Oh Mr. Porter," finishing with a little dance. Mr. Brogden had from 15 to 20 young ladies in his choir, and for six years Gertie Millar had excellent opportunities of learning singing, dancing and speaking parts. She appeared in pantomime at the beginning of her career at the Prince's Theatre, Bradford.

During the later 'nineties she appeared as Dora, a lady journalist, in *The New Barmaid* on tour. In August, 1900, she had her first engagement with George Edwardes as Isobel Blyth in *The Messenger Boy* on tour, and in the second act she sang Lionel Monckton's tuneful number "Maisie is a Daisy," which made Rosie Boote (the Marchioness of Headfort) famous at the Gaiety. After this tour, Gertie Millar appeared at the Comedy—now the Gaiety—Theatre, Manchester, in 1900-1901, as Polly in *Robinson Crusoe*, which ran for three months. Lionel Monckton—Gertie Millar's first husband—composed all the songs that made her famous, and usually wrote the words also under the nom de plume of Leslie Mayne. After the pantomime engagement in Manchester, she made her first appearance at the Gaiety on June 12, 1901, as Cora Bellamy in *The Toreador*, and scored her first big success with her husband's songs "Keep off the Grass" and "Captivating Cora"—two dainty numbers. She continued to appear at the Gaiety for about eight years as leading lady, with those great artists Edmund Payne, Connie Ediss and George Grossmith.

After her Gaiety engagements, Gertie Millar migrated to the Adelphi, under George Edwardes' management, and appeared in *The Quaker Girl* and *The Dancing Mistress*. She made her first appearance on the variety stage at the London Coliseum on September 7, 1914.

While appearing at Daly's Theatre, she was allowed the privilege, when arriving at and leaving the theatre, of using the front entrance instead of the stage door—to avoid the great crowds that waited outside the stage door after every performance.

In the fascinating costume of Jozsi in *Gipsy Love* Robert Michaelis once talked to me about stage love-making in his dressing-room at Daly's. This is what he said:—

“All the world loves a lover—so the poets tell us. And love-making on the stage greatly influences the success of a play. The theatre-goers will flock to watch a celebrated stage-lover play a good love scene, while plays utterly lacking in love-interest are generally marked as failures.

“After all, love and love-making are so intensely human. That is why humanity, in general, likes to experience it—and, incidentally, to watch it on the stage. It has been my good fortune to play a lover in practically every part that has come my way. And as far as I understand the matter, there is only one way to tackle stage love-making. That is, to make it appear as real as possible. When two lovers are facing the footlights, the whole audience should envy them heartily, if their acting is at all convincing.”

While Robert Michaelis was on tour in *The Dollar Princess* an amusing incident occurred. He was playing the love scene in the second act, where Alice forces Fairfax to take down a letter to himself on the typewriter. The scene had not gone far when a galleryite, unable any longer to remain silent at the spectacle of Fairfax being bullied by Alice, shouted :

“Don’t you stand it, mister! Don’t let ’er bully you! . . . A bit of a girl! . . . Go for ’er mister—go for ’er.”

Michaelis commented :

“We both laughed so much that ‘going for ’er’ became a sheer impossibility.”

At the end of November, 1912, Gertie Millar handed over the part of Lady Babby to Constance Drever, who made her first appearance on the Stage at the Savoy Theatre on January 22, 1903, as Kenna in Sir Edward German’s *A Princess of Kensington*.

During 1908 she appeared as Natalie in *The Merry Widow* at Daly’s, and later in the title role at Daly’s and on tour. A year later she played Sonia at the Apollo Theatre, Paris. Constance Drever scored an enormous success as Nadina in *The Chocolate Soldier* which was produced on September 10, 1910, at the Lyric Theatre, and ran for 500 performances.

CHAPTER XIV.

A PERFORMANCE IN MUFTI.

AMONG notable revivals at Daly's Theatre that of *A Waltz Dream* merits a special note. It takes this narrative back to January, 1911—nearly three years after it was first presented in London at the Hicks—now the Globe—Theatre. Basil Hood did the adaptation, Adrian Ross wrote the lyrics, and music composed by Oscar Straus.

The Daly's revival ran for 106 performances—40 fewer than the first run at the Hicks, where the cast included Gertie Millar as Franzi, Mary Grey as Princess Helène, Robert Evett as Lieutenant Niki and George Grossmith as Count Lothar.

At Daly's the cast was Lily Elsie (Franzi), Amy Evans (Princess Helène), Norah Barry (Frederica), May Marton (Fifi), Robert Michaelis (Lieut. Niki), Alec Fraser (Lieut. Montschi), Charles Coleman (Wendolin), J. M. McArdle (Joachim XIII.), and W. H. Berry (Count Lothar). Willie Warde was also in the cast and the revival was produced by Edward Royce.

To quote *The Times* of January 9, 1911:—

“It is three years ago since a version of this operetta was produced at what is now the Globe Theatre. If we remember right, it was not exactly the same version as that produced on Saturday evening. Certainly the music of *A Waltz Dream* does not seem quite so alluring, so fresh, so original as it did in 1908. It is not until the third act that we get the best of it.”

In every Viennese light opera there is a waltz song which dominates the score—for instance, the famous “Merry Widow” waltz, *The Dollar Princess* waltz number—“They are the Dollar Princesses,” the staircase waltz in *The Count of Luxembourg*, the lovely waltz song “My Hero” in *The Chocolate Soldier*, two beautiful waltz numbers in Leo Fall's *The Girl in the Train*, and perhaps the best of all, the waltz duet in Act I. of *A Waltz Dream*.

Interest in *A Waltz Dream* is chiefly sentimental, and concerns the passing love of Lieut. Niki for Franzi, the leader of the ladies' band, to the temporary despair of Niki's wife, the Princess Helène.

The synopsis of scenery is as follows:—Act I. Festival Hall in Joachim's castle in Flausenthurn; Act II. A Garden Restaurant,

During the autumn of 1911, George Edwardes embarked on a big touring venture, a musical comedy repertory company presenting *The Merry Widow*, *The Dollar Princess* and *A Waltz Dream*. The company included Eric Thorne, W. H. Rawlins, Robert Michaelis, Amy Evans, the well-known Welsh soprano, Madeline Seymour, Gladys Guy, Norman Greene (a brother of the late Evie Greene), Betty Callish, Deborah Volar and Kate Ranza, a celebrated prima donna from Copenhagen, where she created the title role in *The Dollar Princess*. The stage productions were by Edward Royce.

George Edwardes' repertory company had some exciting experiences. On one occasion the company was travelling from Blackpool to Dublin, where they were due to appear during Horse Show Week in August, 1911. A railway strike prevented them from taking the usual route, via Holyhead and Kingstown, so they had to travel by a roundabout route, by way of Fleetwood to Belfast, and then by train from Belfast to Dublin. Unless I am very much mistaken, the strike had not reached Ireland.

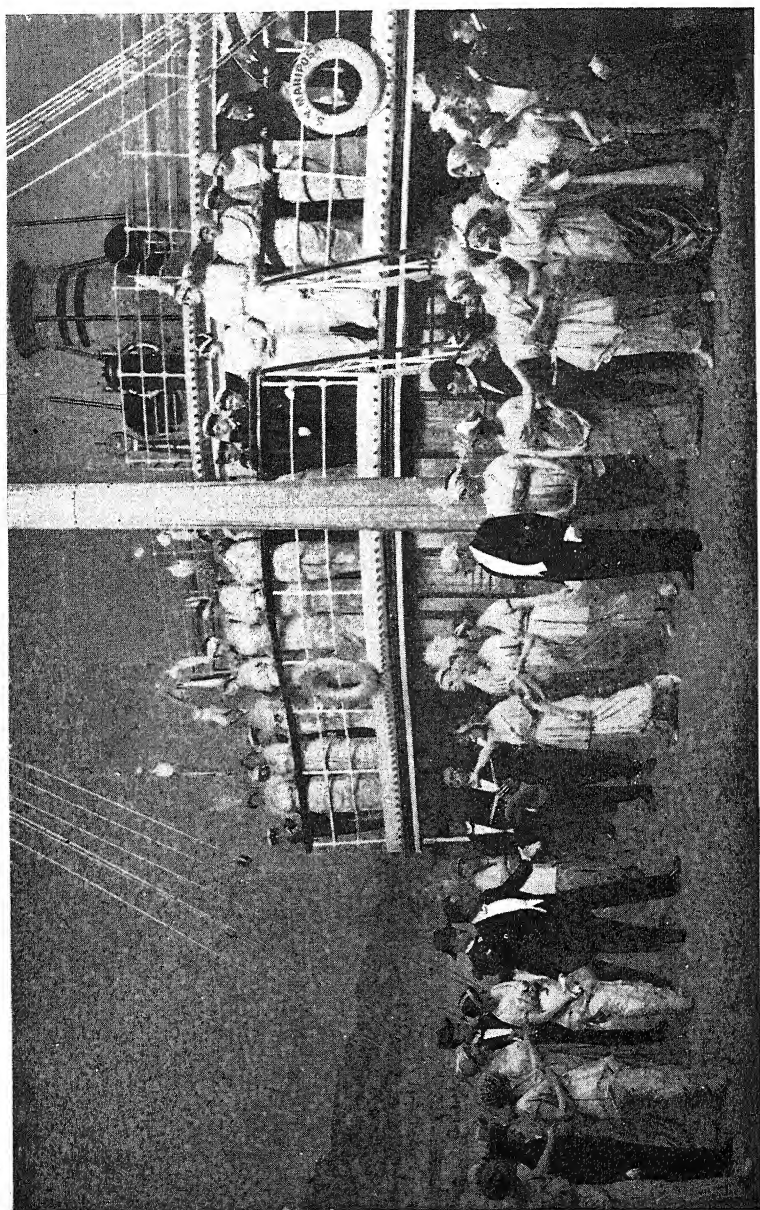
"The Management regret to have to ask the kind indulgence of the audience in the event of *The Dollar Princess* having to be played without stage costumes and the original scenery. In consequence of strike troubles it has been possible to get only the artistes over from England. The costumes and scenery may probably arrive in time for the performance and will be utilised if at all possible."

When the curtain rose on the first act, one of the theatre's stock scenes did service for the gorgeous millionaire's palace. Members of the company were in everyday dress—the gentlemen in lounge suits, and the ladies mainly in shirt blouses and tight skirts. Two of the principal ladies were lucky enough to have white tea frocks in which they disported themselves and passed as being "dressed." Some of the others were very much upset at having to appear before a large audience in travelling costumes.

The Theatre Royal management acquitted themselves well in the matter of scenery and "props." The Manager of the company, my old friend Herbert Ralland, coming before the curtain in the first interval, made an explanatory speech. He said he had to ask the indulgence of the audience on behalf of the management for not having been able to present the opera in the complete and elaborate form associated with George Edwardes' productions. The ladies and gentlemen of the company had been travelling almost continuously since Saturday night's performance in Blackpool. "They arrived at



GERTIE MILLAR
(Countess of Dudley)
at the age of 27



One of the finest built up yacht scenes ever put on the stage—a setting from
The Marriage Market including

ELISE CRAVEN, ROBERT MICHAELIS, E. A. DOUGLAS, TOM WALLS and SARI PETRASS

the Theatre," he said, "in the clothes that they now all stand in. We are not even able to present them to you in the more appropriate attire they are in the habit of wearing. You will quite appreciate the diffidence felt by the ladies of the company in having to appear before you in this way in anything they could—well, pick up. We have just received a telegram from Holyhead to the effect that the scenery and baggage will be with us about 10 o'clock to-night. I am sorry about the delay, but to-morrow night we shall be able to present the show to you in its complete form."

The audience accepted this announcement good-humouredly, and they appeared thoroughly to enjoy the unique performance. Indeed, there was no reason why they should not. The absent features were more than compensated for by amusing unrehearsed incidents resulting from the exceptional conditions under which the performance was given. Little of the "business" lost its point, and the artists' own lively appreciation of the situation introduced fun. And the touch of pathos at the close of the second act—which shows that money cannot buy love—did not fail in its effect; in fact, it seemed to be stripped of some of its artificiality. The gilt was off, but the gingerbread was none the less agreeable.

But worse was to come. In the rush to get away from Blackpool, the box containing the band parts had been left behind. Luckily, however, the musical director, Thomas M. Tunbridge, was able to buy a requisite quantity of vocal scores of *The Dollar Princess* in Dublin. The box arrived on the Tuesday morning, having been sent poste haste by motor from Blackpool to Holyhead, and put on the mail boat to Kingstown. So ended a very exciting and anxious time for all concerned, including myself as George Edwardes' publicity man.

I should mention that the Guv'nor, who was in Dublin at the time, met the company on arrival at Amiens Street Station. He was staying at Malahide, outside Dublin, and I, of course, had to keep in touch with him at his hotel and let him know what was happening. I remember telling him on the 'phone that the company were coming to Dublin without their stage costumes or scenery. All he said was: "That is very awkward," but he was not a bit perturbed.

He watched the Monday evening performance of *The Dollar Princess* in mufti, thoroughly enjoyed it and entered into the spirit of it. He usually visited Dublin during Horse Show Week, often staying at Boss Croker's palatial residence outside Dublin.

Great credit was due to Herbert Ralland for the way in which he directed the company's tour under such trying circumstances.

To return to the revival at Daly's of *A Waltz Dream*; as I have said, it had a most successful run, but George Edwardes was working hard behind the scenes on a new production for the theatre. This was *The Marriage Market*, which was first presented there on May 17, 1913. It was adapted from the German by Gladys Unger, with lyrics by Arthur Anderson and Adrian Ross, and music by Victor Jacobi.

The cast included G. P. Huntley (Lord Hurlingham), W. H. Berry (Blinker, valet to Lord Hurlingham), Robert Michaelis (Jack Fleetwood, known as "Slippery Jack"), E. A. Douglas (Senator Gilroy), Tom Walls (Bald Faced Sandy, Sheriff of Mendocino Bluff); Hugh Wakefield, now well-known on the stage and screen, played the small part of Hi-Ti (Chinese Bar Keeper). A famous entertainer of the present day, Ronald Frankau, was a member of the chorus in *The Marriage Market* at Daly's. He was then Frank Ronalds. Harry Dearth appeared as the Captain of the "Mariposa," Gertie Millar as Kitty Kent, Avice Kelham as Emma (maid to Mariposa), Elise Craven as a Middy and Sari Petrass as Mariposa Gilroy.

Here is the synopsis of scenery: Act 1. Mendocino Bluff, Southern California (E. H. Ryan); Act 2. The Yacht "Mariposa" anchored in the Bay of San Francisco (Alfred Terraine); Act 3. Senator Gilroy's Palace, San Francisco (E. H. Ryan). Production by Edward Royce. The composer, Victor Jacobi, though not the equal of Franz Lehar and Leo Fall, supplied most agreeable music. His orchestration is full of colour and he also writes with dramatic point.

The Times notice of May 19, 1913, said:—

"Mr. Huntley is entirely delightful, while Mr. Berry is his very amusing self. Miss Avice Kelham has plenty of brightness and jollity. Miss Elise Craven is a girlish but attractive midshipman. Mr. Michaelis is picturesque and forcible enough to compensate for Miss Sari Petrass's lack of dramatic power. Miss Gertie Millar only wants a little more and a little better material."

In January, 1914, Unity More took up the part of Emma in *The Marriage Market*, replacing Avice Kelham.

Tom Walls played quite a small part in *The Marriage Market*, made his first appearance on the stage in a pantomime in Glasgow in 1905, and two years later he was appearing on the London stage. He had been a policeman, after having abandoned his apprenticeship to locomotive engineering, in the belief that he could find fame and excitement as an expert crime investigator. He did not, however, realise this ambition. Eventually he left his "beat" to join a pierrot troupe, and from there got his first pantomime engagement. Tom

Walls has had an amazing career as engine driver, policeman, seaside busker, jockey, Derby winning owner, theatre magnate, stage and film star. He appeared in two other Daly's shows with which I shall deal later.

G. P. Huntley made his first appearance at Daly's as Lord Hurlingham in *The Marriage Market*.

One evening G. P. was dining at Romano's with a very old and dear friend of his, whom he had not seen for some time. The friend had with him his son and heir, who was on his way back to school. The fond father who had never been accused of carrying teetotal principles to excess, gave the lad during dinner a lot of well-meant advice, and was, to Huntley's amusement, very insistent on temperate habits. He declared solemnly: "Never drink more than you can carry, my boy. Remember a gentleman always stops when he has had enough. Isn't that so George?" And, of course, G. P. said: "Yes, certainly that is so." "But," said the boy, "How can I tell when I have had enough, or when I am drunk?" The father pointed with his finger — "You see those two men over in that corner? If you could see four men you would certainly be tight." The boy looked in the direction indicated very carefully. "No doubt," he said dubiously, "but there's only one man in the corner."

Sari Petrass, Mariposa Gilroy of *The Marriage Market*, was in private life Mrs. Sari Gabrielle Crocker, the wife of Gordon Crocker, Of Hungarian origin, but, of course, British by marriage, she was a popular singer and dancer before the last war, in Budapest, where she was born in 1890. Sari was a very fine horsewoman and was frequently to be seen riding in Rotten Row.

In September, 1930, her brilliant career came to a tragic end. She was travelling with Lady (Allan) Horne, when their motor car plunged into the River Scheldt; both were drowned. The car had come through Eastern Flanders as far as the pontoon at Sainte-Anne. In driving on to the boat which was to take it across the Scheldt to Antwerp the chauffeur was dazzled by the glare of the lights of the vehicle reflected in the water, and the car went into the river. The chauffeur was able to get clear and swam ashore, but suffering from shock was unable to give a clear account of the accident.

Sari Petrass's last appearance in London was at the Prince of Wales Theatre as Sylva in Kalman's operetta *The Gipsy Princess* in 1921.

My story of *The Marriage Market* would not be complete without reference to Jenny, the donkey, which Sari Petrass rode when she made her first entrance. Jenny belonged to a firm in Drury Lane,

which specialised in supplying animals for the stage to all the leading theatres. Jenny appeared in many West End productions, and once with Sarah Bernhardt. Her earnings were as much as £9 a week. She never would enter the stage door at Daly's without the inducement of several lumps of sugar offered by the stage-door keeper. She was eventually bought by a costermonger, W. J. Byatt, of Hoxton, where she "kissed" all comers to her snug stable. When not appearing on the stage, Jenny earned her living by hauling Byatt's donkey-cart round the streets. She was a great Daly favourite.

On March 6, 1914, King George V. and Queen Mary witnessed a performance of *The Marriage Market* at Daly's Theatre. On arrival, their Majesties were received by the then Manager, the immaculate T. J. Courtly. Courtly was one of the Guv'nor's managers on tour before he came to Daly's Theatre, and was formerly with Sir George Dance. He represented the Tower and Palace Company Ltd., Blackpool, in London until he died.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN ROYALTY GOES TO THE SHOW.

THERE seems to be a general impression that theatre-going members of the Royal family do not pay for their seats. This is not so, although from the strictly managerial business point of view, they are the most valuable of all patrons. The visit of Royalty to any theatre ensures good business, and managers have shown appreciation of this fact by building special boxes at a few hours' notice—notably at Drury Lane, where a special Royal Box was erected in the centre of the pit for King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra. At most of the London theatres there is a private entrance for members of the Royal family and, of course, managements are eager to ensure the comfort of Royal patrons by making all necessary arrangements for their reception and seating. But sometimes the schedule is thrown out of gear.

On one occasion at the Gaiety Theatre, King Edward VII. arrived a little earlier than the appointed time, and although attended by people who should have known the Royal entrance, His Majesty entered by the stage door by mistake. King Edward was very much amused when he discovered the error.

Looking back over the years of the great triumphs of Daly's Theatre, to which Royalty added its gracious patronage, many well-known theatrical personalities leap to my mind—among them, always prominently, the picturesque figure of bearded Willie Clarkson, who supplied the wigs for Daly's artists. He has been described as "the greatest beautifier in the world," and for half a century he bewigged and costumed every theatrical personality of note. Clarkson served Royalty and often assisted in the production of plays for Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle. He was an amazing man—a repository of stage anecdote and lore, and his stories ranged from the comic to the pathetic, from the grotesque to the horrible. He used to swear that he once served Jack the Ripper with a wig which was afterwards found at the scene of one of the murders.

However, to return to the Daly's scene. On August 4, 1914, war broke out and for a time created chaos in the theatrical world. Managements, looking ahead, tried to adjust themselves quickly to the new and unprecedented conditions. George Edwardes' plans for the production of a new Continental musical play had to be

abandoned. He decided on the revival of a tried favourite, and so on October 28, 1914, *A Country Girl* followed *The Marriage Market* at Daly's Theatre. It was a sound choice, for *A Country Girl* is, in my opinion, one of the best and most durable of English musical plays.

The cast included Robert Michaelis (Geoffrey Challoner), Leedham Bantock (The Rajah of Bhong), Tom Walls (Sir Joseph Verity), Vernon Davidson (Douglas Verity), Willie Warde (Granfer Mummery), Pop Cory (Lord Anchester), Arthur Wellesley (Captain Grassmere), and W. H. Berry as Barry. Winifred Barnes appeared as Marjory Joy, Mabel Sealby (Madame Sophie), Clara Butterworth (Princess Mehelaneth of Bhong), Phyllis le Grand (Miss Quintin Raikes), Kate Welch (Nurse), Elise Craven (Miss Carruthers), Veda le Grand (Lady Arnott), Modesta Daly (Lady Anchester), Winsome Russell (Lady Cynthia Abbey), Elsie Spencer (Miss Ecroyd), Connie Stewart (Miss Courtlands), Dolly Dombey (Miss Egerton), and Gertie Millar as Nan. Stage production was by Edward Royce, and scenery by Alfred Terraine.

In the first act a new number, "The Sailor Man," words by Adrian Ross and music by Lionel Monckton, was introduced for Robert Michaelis, and new words were written by Adrian Ross for the "Molly the Marchioness" song for Gertie Millar. In the second act there was a new opening chorus, a new Adrian Ross song "One of my Customers" for Mabel Sealby as Sophie, a "Crinoline" number for Gertie Millar, and "Devonshire Fairies" also sung by Gertie Millar, with Elise Craven as the dancer.

Clara Butterworth, the Princess, was also provided with a new song entitled "There's a lot of Love in the World," and there were new words for the "Peace" number sung by W. H. Berry. A special number, "Me and Mrs. Brown," composed by Paul Rubens, with words by Adrian Ross, was introduced into the second act for Berry. It is worth recalling that two members of the original cast, Fred Vigay and Willie Warde, took part in the revival.

Arthur Wellesley, who appeared as Captain Grassmere in *A Country Girl* revival, is the fourth Earl Cowley. When he was twenty he was in the chorus in *Peggy* at the Gaiety. Since then he has played in numerous productions, both in London and the United States. When he was Viscount Dangan he appeared as Lord Ronny in *The Girl on the Film* at the Gaiety, and toured America with that Company. In London early in 1911, he went to work in the Quinlan Operatic Company's scenic workshop at Hendon, starting as a paint-room labourer at 25s. a week—cleaning the palettes, mixing the colours, and other odd jobs—rising to 30s. at the end of the first week, and a

fortnight later getting his salary increased to £2 a week. It was a strange situation for an heir to a peerage and 4,000 acres, and when he tried to obtain an allowance from his father he was summoned to appear before Mr. Justice Warrington as a Chancery Ward. For ten months he was a Second Lieutenant in the 5th Lancers at Dublin, but he resigned his commission and joined a stock company, going on the road as stage manager.

Elise Craven, who took the part originally played by Topsy Sinden, which included special dances, made her first appearance at His Majesty's Theatre in *Pinkie and the Fairies* when she was only 10 years old.

The following summarises the Press commentary on the principal players in the revival of *A Country Girl* at Daly's.

Gertie Millar with all her delightful vivacity and charm ; a more winsome representation of the heroine "Nan" could not be desired. W. H. Berry kept the house in fits as usual by his characteristic fun, and should not be missed in these depressing times. Winifred Barnes is a graceful vocalist. She made a distinct hit with her singing and general charm. Robert Michaelis gave his usual distinctive and sympathetic rendering to the part of the handsome sailor. Mabel Sealby is delightfully cute as Sophie, and immediately captivated the audience. Clara Butterworth created a furore with her magnificent rendering of "Under the Deodar."

Here I must leave the revival of *A Country Girl* and pass on to the next production at Daly's, which was the musical play *Betty* by Frederick Lonsdale and Gladys Unger, music by Paul Rubens, and additional music by Ernest Stephan. It was produced on April 24, 1915, but it had previously been staged at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, on December 24, 1914, for a short season. The cast included Winifred Barnes (Betty), Daisy Burrell (David), Avice Kelham (Estelle), Cameron Carr, C. M. Lowne and G. P. Huntley (Lord Playne). At Daly's, Huntley appeared with Donald Calthorp (Earl of Beverley), W. H. Berry (Achille Jotte), Isabel Delorme (Chicquetta), Madeline Seymour (Lady Playne), Mabel Sealby (Estelle), C. M. Lowne (Duke of Crowborough), Master Cyril Doughty (Alf) and Winifred Barnes (Betty). Tom Walls succeeded G. P. Huntley as Lord Playne in October, 1915.

Cinderella is the oldest plot in musical comedy. "Find a new twist in it," stage people say, "and there is a fortune." In spite of innumerable adaptations made by so many authors, its sweet simplicity still finds interested audiences and sympathetic readers. *Betty*, a beautiful play set to charming music, exploits the sentiments of the

Cinderella theme. It ran for 391 performances.

There are three acts, the first being the Earl of Beverley's House in Regent's Park ; the second, the Garden of the Earl of Beverley's House, and the third, Lord Playne's House in London. A simpler or more tender little love piece was never produced at Daly's—that is the highest tribute I can pay to the charms of *Betty*.

Winifred Barnes, who played the title role, made her first appearance on the stage at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, in December, 1907 ; as one of the Varsity girls in the Gaiety musical play *The Girls of Gottenberg*. Later she joined the chorus of *Our Miss Gibbs* at the Gaiety. She then retired from the stage to study singing seriously, and gave a recital at Bechstein Hall. George Edwardes was in the audience. He immediately offered her an engagement at Daly's Theatre, and she succeeded Sari Petrass in the part of Mariposa in *The Marriage Market* at four hours' notice. She toured the provinces in this part, and in May, 1916, she appeared in *The Happy Day*. Death cut short her brilliant career in April, 1935, at the age of 40.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GUV’NOR’S LAST CURTAIN.

IT was on October 4, 1915, that death struck a heavy blow at Daly’s. On that day George Edwardes died at his London house, 11 Park Square West, within a few days of his 63rd birthday. The theatre was closed for the first four days of that black week.

It is sad to trace the events leading to the Guv’nor’s death. At the outbreak of the war he was taking a “cure” at Bad Nauheim, the famous “heart spa,” near Frankfort in Germany. Just after the declaration of war he was interned by the Germans. His physical condition was so grave that the American Consul intervened on his behalf. He told the Germans that if George Edwardes was not released, he would die at Bad Nauheim.

The Guv’nor was released in October, 1914, and on his return to England he completed his “cure” at Bournemouth, where he occupied one of those grey stone, green-shuttered houses surrounded by pine trees. Here in peace, among his own people, there was a chance of a restoration to health; but confinement in a German camp had done its work and undoubtedly hastened his death.

I will quote an interview he gave in Rotterdam, on his way home from Germany, to James Dunn of the *Daily Mail*, for it conveys an idea of what he had been through. The Guv’nor was obviously very much shaken, though he said with a smile: “I am not so bad as when I left Germany. I’ve had an awful time. No sooner did war break out than all the English visitors were insulted, jeered at, and abused, not only by residents but even by the waiters in the hotel, who refused to speak a word of English. Most of the English visitors were elderly people staying for the benefit of their health, and fifty are still there, unable to get money sent to them, and enduring petty spite and irritating restrictions which come naturally to the Germans.”

“And how do you feel now that it is all over?” Dunn asked.

Edwardes smiled grimly. “I feel like the Lancashire working man who delivered the most biting dramatic criticism ever heard. You know the story? When the play was over he turned to his wife and exclaimed, “Well, tha’ would come!”

Although compelled to be indoors at nine o’clock every night and not permitted to go more than a mile from the town, the Guv’nor

said he was not brutally treated, but it was very galling having to put up with official gibes and insults. "And all the time, at all hours, they were shouting and ringing their jangling bells to celebrate victories until their own wounded protested at the noise. Oh, yes, they had fully made up their minds they were going to win, and all they could talk about was an invasion of England. But there was one young Englishman they couldn't bully. He was a smart young chap, what you might call a 'nut,' and nothing seemed to upset him. When, like the rest of us, he was marched into the police office, shouted at, and told he must report himself, he just smiled and remarked, 'Quite seasonable weather we're having, don't you think, Commissioner?'

"The Commissioner frowned at him and made no reply, but the young fellow lounged gracefully against the wall and talked for ten minutes until he had the Commissioner furious but impotent. Two hours after he had been dismissed, our young Englishman again presented himself at the police station, still smiling. 'What do you want?' growled the Commissioner. 'Oh, nothing,' was the cool reply. 'I thought as I was passing I might just as well report myself, and I forgot to say before that last year's weather could not compare with this. Talking about weather, . . .'

"'Get out,' yelled the commissioner, 'and don't let me see your dirty face again!' And he never did," said Mr. Edwardes, laughing. "We had no idea how the war was going, and the German stories made very humpy reading. I've had enough of Germany to last me the rest of my life."

"Was it solely on account of your health that they let you go?" Mr. Dunn inquired. "Only partly that," Edwardes replied. "An American journalist reported my case to a Chicago paper, and as the Germans are extremely anxious to keep well in with the Americans, they decided to let me go. But my health did not trouble them. When I came away the officials wished me to come through Switzerland, and when the doctor said the long journey might mean my death, the only official comment was, 'A railway train is as good as any place to die in.' As it was, they sent me to Holland by the longest possible route so as to avoid a glimpse of the Rhine, which for some very good reason they are guarding from inquisitive eyes."

"And you will be glad to get back home?"

"Glad!" exclaimed the Guv'nor. "It will be a happy moment when I tread London streets again."

George Edwardes was buried at Kensal Green Cemetery on October 7, 1915. There were many striking tributes of affectionate regard. An immense gathering of mourners was present at a solemn

Requiem Mass held in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street, Berkeley Square, prior to the interment. Long before the appointed hour of the Requiem—11 a.m.—the church filled while the organist played Chopin's "Funeral March."

The chief mourners were Mrs. George Edwardes (the widow), Captain D'Arcy Edwardes (son, in khaki, on leave from the front), Mr. and Mrs. Cuthbert Sherbrooke (son-in-law and eldest daughter), Lieutenant and Mrs. H. O'Mally (son-in-law and daughter), Miss Nora Edwardes (daughter), Major Edwardes (brother), and Mr. Edwardes's two sisters, Mrs. Livesey and Mrs. Chapman. Near them, representing Daly's Theatre, were Arthur Aldin, F. J. Blackman, Charles Cannon, Edward Royce and E. J. Biggs. From Daly's also came Merlin Morgan, the musical director, and the heads of departments, including H. W. Anderson, of the box-office. From the Gaiety Theatre came W. H. Dawes, and Charlton-Mann represented the Adelphi Theatre. Captain J. A. E. Malone was prevented from attending by his military duties.

The funeral at St. Mary's Cemetery, Kensal Green, was of a purely private and family character. The general public was not admitted to the ground. Nevertheless, a great crowd gathered at the gates to pay their tribute to a man who had brought so much brightness into their lives. Rarely have so many beautiful floral tributes been seen at a funeral. So numerous were the wreaths that a carpet of flowers was stretched between the graves. The motor-hearse, itself a mass of blooms, was preceded by four motor-cars filled with wreaths.

Father Gavin, S.J., a friend of George Edwardes for over 30 years, met the cortège at the little Catholic Church and, led by a cross-bearer and acolytes, proceeded to the grave. As the body was lowered, Father Gavin recited the "Benedictus," and afterwards sprinkled the remains with holy water, and so the curtain was rung down for the last time on the life of a great man of the theatre.

H. Chance Newton of *The Referee* wrote: "We of *The Referee* had known George Edwardes for over thirty years, with never a quarrel or disagreement in all that time. It was no mere obituary compliment to say that to know George Edwardes was to esteem him. He was a most lovable—indeed, a most fascinating personality. He was strong alike in his sympathies and in his outspokenness. By his death the theatrical world loses a great manager."

George Edwardes, Irish by descent, was born at Cleethorpes, near Grimsby, where his father held an official position in the Customs. As a young man he took samples of life—crammed for Woolwich and failed in the entrance examination, worked for a while in a City office,

tried Hatton Garden, and spent a year or two in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad). When he was studying for the Army, his cousin, Michael Gunn, suggested that he should fill in his spare moments by looking after one of Gunn's companies then touring—*The Lady of Lyons*. Edwardes agreed, and began at Leicester. He grew interested in the work, and resolved to make the theatre his life. A wonderful friendship existed between the two cousins. George Edwardes was many years the junior of Michael Gunn, whom he regarded as the best and ablest man he ever knew.

Edwardes took pride in the fact that he was at one time associated with Mrs. D'Oyly Carte—mother of Rupert D'Oyly Carte.

"Much of what I knew about the business of the theatre," he said, "I acquired from knowing that remarkable woman."

He was appointed acting manager to D'Oyly Carte at the Opera Comique in 1875, after his touring engagement.

C. J. Abud tells the following characteristic anecdote of George Edwardes.

"I shall never forget my first meeting with George Edwardes. We were boyish acting managers together, and first came into contact in 1880, when I was at the Globe, managing for Lord Kilmorey, and he was at the Opera Comique when *H.M.S. Pinafore* was produced, looking after the interests of Michael Gunn, who had a share with D'Oyly Carte. These two theatres joined each other. I soon got to know George by sight, but did not meet him personally till one night he ran into me at the Globe and said, 'I wish to goodness you would let me go up to the roof of your theatre.' Not unnaturally I wondered whether he had gone mad.

"What on earth for? I asked.

"Well, the truth is, D'Oyly Carte is waiting for me at the box-office, and I am supposed to be in the theatre. I want you to let me out of the trap-door of the Opera Comique. Do you understand?"

"I understood! It was a daring project—a truly George Edwardes project! But like most of George Edwardes' startling schemes, it came off. He crossed from the roof on one theatre to the roof of the other, down again—*et voila!* He found D'Oyly Carte impatiently waiting for him at the box-office. And George Edwardes, with that sang-froid which was one of his most amazing and amusing characteristics, calmly informed Carte that he had just been counting the gallery!"

C. J. Abud was at one time Sarah Bernhardt's English manager. He also ran his own companies on tour and owned the touring rights

of *Under the Red Robe* and *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Incidentally, I had my first engagement on tour in charge of the publicity of one of Abud's *Under the Red Robe* companies at the age of 21. Abud, in later years, managed *A Country Girl* and *The Cingalee* companies on tour for George Edwardes.

When D'Oyly Carte opened his new Savoy Theatre, with *Patience* transferred from the Opera Comique, on October 10, 1881, George Edwardes was appointed acting manager. The young handsome Irishman, with his curly hair and agreeable manner, had a pair of keen blue eyes set very wide apart under a broad, level brow, and he saw more than most people of what he was looking at. For instance, he saw that the Gilbert and Sullivan operas had given public taste a new direction. He saw that the old-fashioned Gaiety burlesque was moribund, and that there was a chance for a man who could devise a new kind of musical entertainment.

In 1885 he acquired an interest with John Hollingshead in the old Gaiety Theatre, and soon assumed the full responsibility of management. They produced *Little Jack Sheppard*, which was not a burlesque at all, but a simple story humorously treated. It achieved a pronounced success. The cast included David James, Marion Hood, Fred Leslie, Sylvia Grey and Nellie Farren, who had opportunities not only of amusing but also of utilising gifts that had been in danger of being forgotten. The young manager began his career by giving artists parts worthy of their gifts.

In the summer of 1886 George Edwardes dissolved partnership with John Hollingshead. The success of *Little Jack Sheppard* induced the Guv'nor to book Fred Leslie for a long engagement. It was sent to the country and with its successors, notably *Monte Cristo Junior*, *Frankenstein*, *Carmen-up-to-date*, *Ruy Blas*—or the blasé Roue—it toured America and Australia.

On John Hollingshead's withdrawal from the Gaiety Theatre George Edwardes, in conjunction with H. J. Leslie, produced a comic opera called *Dorothy*, on September 25, 1886. This piece was adapted from a Charles the Second comedy by Aphra Behn, by B. C. Stephenson, and the music was composed by Alfred Cellier. It was admirably casted. A new company was engaged, which included Marion Hood, Redfern Hollins, Hayden Coffin, Furneaux Cook, Arthur Williams, Harriet Coveney, Ben Davies and others. The piece was billed as a "Comedy-opera," and it had much of the character of *Martha*. Cellier's music had charm and melody.

But *Dorothy* was not a great success at the Gaiety. Edwardes had spent several thousands of pounds on it, and although he tried all he

knew to make it go, even to changing the theatre, he dropped money all the time. At last he got a song composed by Cellier. This number was "Queen of my Heart"—the biggest smash-hit of the time. It made *Dorothy* the rage of the town, but it came too late for Edwardes. Just about that time he happened to meet the elder Grossmith and Rutland Barrington. *Ruddigore* was about to be produced, and they told Edwardes it was going to be the biggest hit of the Gilbert and Sullivan series of operas. Edwardes concluded that *Dorothy* had no chance against such a production. He had decided to withdraw it when his accountant, H. J. Leslie, approached him with an offer to buy *Dorothy* for £1,000. The Guv'nor was sick of the piece and was only too glad to agree to the terms. Immediately, a *Dorothy* boom set in. For his modest outlay Leslie must have netted about £100,000. This is only one instance of luck in the stage lottery. I should mention that *Dorothy* was transferred from the Gaiety to the Prince of Wales' Theatre, where Dame Marie Tempest succeeded Marion Hood in the name part. The play ran for 931 performances at the Prince of Wales' and Lyric Theatres. George Edwardes made two other big errors of judgment. He turned down *The Chocolate Soldier* and *La Poupée*—both huge successes.

Fred Leslie, who remained a member of the Gaiety Company up to the time of his death in 1892, at the early age of 37, was essentially a variety artist of the highest kind. His unexpected and regretted end, following the painful illness of his professional companion, Nellie Farren, was a serious blow to the English theatre. The high esteem in which Nellie Farren was held by the public, and the deep sympathy her illness inspired, was expressed in concrete form on March 17, 1898, in a gigantic benefit at Drury Lane Theatre, organised by George Edwardes. Such an enthusiastic demonstration has probably never been seen before in a London Theatre. Nellie Farren was taken ill before the run of *Cinder Ellen-up-too-late* and her part was taken by Kate James.

Other productions at the Old Gaiety under George Edwardes' management included *Miss Esmeralda*, *Faust-up-to-date*, *Joan of Arc*, *Don Juan*, a revival of *Little Jack Sheppard* with Sir (then Mr.) Seymour Hicks as Jonathan Wild, in 1894, and *In Town*. In 1888 the Gaiety was turned over to a limited company, George Edwardes remaining as Managing Director until 1915, with a remuneration of £1,800 a year.

The Toreador, put on in 1901, was the last production at the old Gaiety, and the last night was on July 4, 1903—an event never to be forgotten by those who were present. When the doors opened in

the afternoon—several hours before the show was timed to begin—the people went in, in a very orderly manner—no crowding or hustling each one recognising that his neighbour had waited as long as himself. The orchestra played all the tunes of former successes, and the audience sang them heartily. These songs represented a succession of plays, stretching over thirty-five years—from the old burlesque to the advent of the popular musical comedy.

The programme arranged for this farewell performance was Act 2 of *The Toreador* by J. T. Tanner and Harry Nicholls, with music by Ivan Caryll and Lionel Monckton, followed by *The Linkman* or Gaiety Memories, written by George Grossmith. The introduction of *The Linkman* as a supplement or postscript was a happy idea, cleverly carried out. Its Gaiety memories enlightened the younger members of the audience and charmed the older ones.

At the end Sir Henry Irving, accompanied by George Edwardes, appeared and made a moving speech. John Hollingshead came just in time to hear the kindly allusions to himself and to receive a hearty handshake from the great actor who had once been a member of his company at the old Gaiety. “Auld Lang Syne” was sung by Florence St. John and Hayden Coffin, the whole house standing and joining in.

The site of the old Gaiety Theatre eventually became the offices of *The Morning Post*. Why did the old Gaiety expire amid such a thunderstorm of tears and cheers? Why was it reincarnated with Royalty in the boxes and all “Who’s Who” in the stalls? It was because the old Gaiety gave to London a new form of unreflecting laughter. It introduced light music which wanted no training to understand. It was not too broad and not too heavy—a truly British compromise; with dresses and dances designed always to please the eye. In short, it gave a bright, topical, laughable entertainment to tickle the fancy of the well-dined of all ages.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE NEW GAIETY.

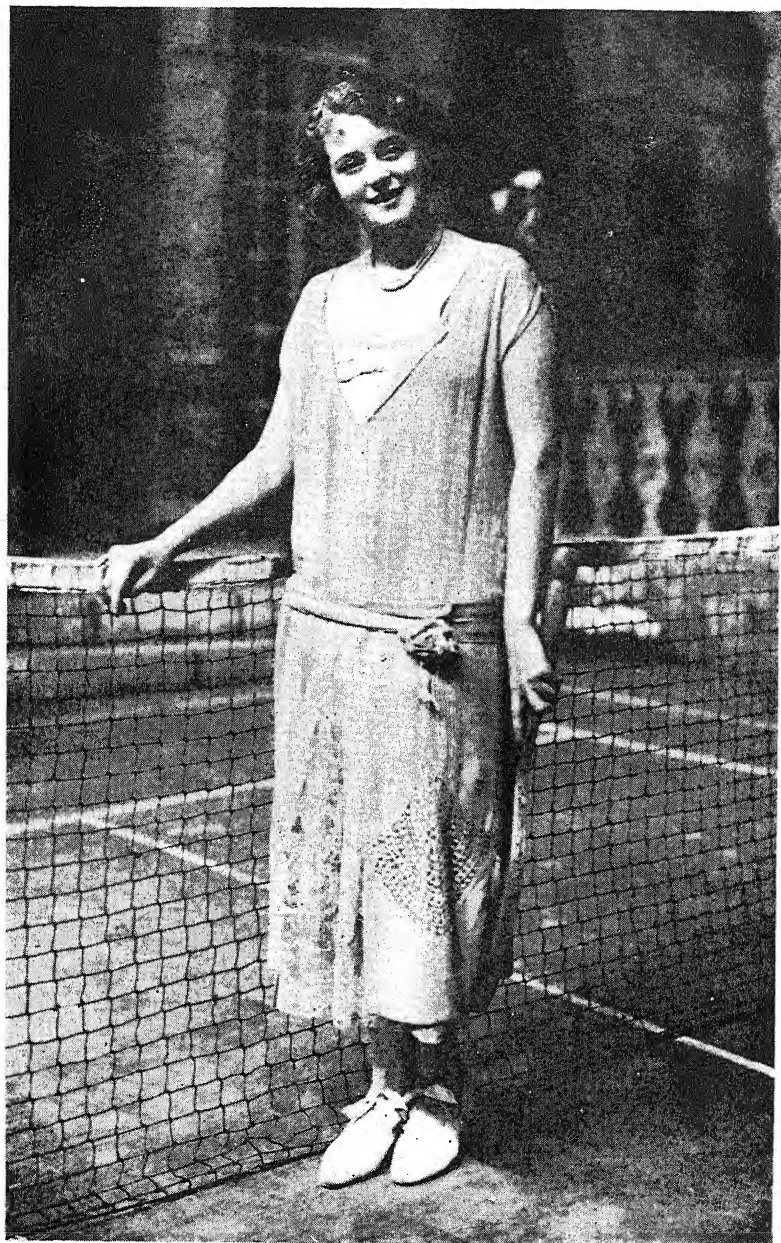
THE new Gaiety Theatre, which was to reflect the special theatrical style of the Edwardian period, was opened on October 26, 1903, with King Edward and Queen Alexandra standing sponsors. It was designed by Ernest Runtz and built at a cost of £88,000. Frank Brangwyn, the famous R.A., once said that he ranked it among the finest modern buildings in London from the point of architectural harmony.

The new Gaiety opened with *The Orchid*, a musical comedy. Hours before the doors were due to open, George Edwardes was begged to let the crowd in, and he finally agreed. From dawn onwards the great crowd had waited in blustering weather. Among the first arrivals were three young ladies who parked themselves on camp stools at the pit entrance, with luncheon baskets, needlework, and a miniature library. By the afternoon there was the danger of a pavement block, so the Guv'nor gave the word to open the doors.

Among the artists who performed for the first time on the new Gaiety stage were Edmund Payne, George Grossmith, Fred Wright, Jr., Robert Nainby, Harry Grattan and Lionel Mackinder—destined to be the first prominent actor killed in the last war. Also in *The Orchid* cast were Gertie Millar, Marie Studholme, Gabrielle Ray and Connie Ediss. Ivan Caryll and Lionel Monckton supplied the music, with additional numbers by Paul Rubens. The production was by Sydney Ellison, who staged that lively show *Florodora*.

During the first eight months the new Gaiety earned over £80,000, and the first year's working finished with a profit of £13,811. At the time of writing, this famous theatre is doomed because the £20,000 alterations demanded by the L.C.C. as a condition of renewing the licence is not considered economic.

The Orchid was followed by other successful musical plays under George Edwardes' management, including *The Spring Chicken*, *The New Aladdin*, *The Girls of Gottenberg*, *Havana*, *Our Miss Gibbs*, which held the record run at the new Gaiety. *The Toreador* at the old Gaiety had the longest run of all the Gaiety musical plays, with 675 performances. *Peggy* followed *Our Miss Gibbs*, then *The Sunshine Girl*, *The Girl on the Film*, *After the Girl* and *Adèle*, a musical play from America which, with the original cast, was a flop. This show



EVELYN LAYE
in the title role of *The Dollar Princess*
(Revival)
in the Second Act

Photo—Stage Photo Coy.



Photo—Foulsham and Banfield

LILY ELSIE
in the title role in
The Merry Widow

was minus a chorus, which was no doubt one of the reasons for its failure at the Gaiety.

What names the recollection of the new Gaiety during George Edwardes' management conjures up! To those given above in the cast of *The Orchid* can be added W. H. Berry, Will Evans, Shaun Glenville, Alfred Lester, Robert Hale (father of Binnie and Sonnie), William Spray, Lew Hearn, Olive May, Gaby Deslys, Lily Elsie, Jean Aylwyn, Isobel Elsom, Bonita, Emmy Wehlen, Phyllis Dare, Mabel Russell, Maisie Gay, Ethel Sydney, Kate Cutler, Mabel Sealby, and May de Sousa.

Ivan Caryll invariably conducted the orchestra at the new Gaiety, and when he was not there his deputy and, incidentally, his double, Jacques Grebé, took his place. My old friend, A. E. Dodson, or "Doddy" as his intimates called him, and who was practically bred and born at the old Gaiety Theatre, was stage-manager for many years. After he left the George Edwardes management, he became stage-manager at the old Manchester Hippodrome. I was there at the same time, in charge of the publicity department.

Our Miss Gibbs was hissed on the opening night.

"What changes do you suggest?" George Edwardes was asked when the curtain was dropped before the second act finished.

"None," he answered, "it will be a huge success."

On the next night—a Sunday—he left London for a holiday. The play ran for 636 performances. On another occasion, Edwardes had to postpone a new production on the dress-rehearsal. This was in May, 1907, and the play concerned was *The Girls of Gottenberg*. After a succession of very costly productions, some of which incurred heavy losses, the Guv'nor thought fortune was against him. He put two new pieces into rehearsal, *The Girls of Gottenberg* for the Gaiety and *The Merry Widow* for Daly's. On the night of the Gaiety rehearsal, when all was going smoothly, Gertie Millar suddenly gave a cry and fell down on the stage in the middle of a dance. Edwardes went white and hurried behind the scenes. Gertie—the leading lady—had sprained her ankle, and silently the little crowd in front went home. The play was postponed; but when it was produced the following week, it was a big success.

Here is a good story told by George Grossmith about a rehearsal at the Gaiety.

"As soon as George Edwardes took a play in hand, the theatre was always cleared of all who were not actually concerned in the production. With the Guv'nor in command, nothing but 'the play's the thing' was the order of the day, and the interests of every-

body and everything were momentarily sacrificed until perfection, as he understood it, had been attained. Should a luckless actor happen to displease Mr. Edwardes during the final stage of rehearsal, it quite possibly went hard with him . . . 'Take it off; take it off!' he called on one occasion angrily from the stalls during a rehearsal, as he watched the exaggerated antics of a comedian who had been called from the provinces to fill a place in the Gaiety cast. 'What, sir—this wig?' asked the recruit, pointing to a bright red shock head of hair with which he had adorned himself. 'No, no, not the wig; the man inside it!' came the shattering retort.

Now for a Teddy Payne story. While undergoing a serious illness, he had to spend a considerable time in hospital. His thoughts were far from happy, but in the circumstances he did not believe that his reputation as a humorist was in jeopardy, yet, in truth, it was. One evening a nurse approached him deferentially. "Excuse me, Mr. Payne," she said, "but I've been here three weeks and I'm leaving to-morrow. Could you say something funny before I go?"

I have dealt very considerably in this narrative with the two Gaiety Theatres, but they were part of George Edwardes' story, and just as important in his theatrical life-story as Daly's.

In his many allusions to the plays he produced, Edwardes spoke most frequently of *A Gaiety Girl*, *The Geisha*, *Kitty Grey*, *A Country Girl*, *Veronique*, *The Little Michus*, and *The Merry Widow*. Of all the actors who appeared under his management, none held a higher place in his memory than Fred Leslie. The Guv'nor placed Leslie above all others for his gifts as an actor, author, manager, dancer, and any contribution that could be made to the success of a musical play. Edwardes was very fond of Leslie, and closed the Gaiety Theatre out of respect to him on the evening of his funeral.

After a very few years of management, the Guv'nor began to extend his operations beyond the Gaiety and Daly's Theatres. He had big ideas, and wanted to produce every play that appealed to him. He would have required all the resources of a bank to stage everything that captured his imagination. He never valued money sufficiently to hoard it, and in these days he was certainly extravagant. He said his father was just the same, and always prepared to exceed the limits of the very modest income he earned. Even in the matter of details in the theatre he was prodigal as well as meticulous. In one play he produced, a cheque was needed. He gave instructions to have special books of cheques printed, and when they were delivered, asked why the penny stamp was not embossed on them!

Up to August, 1915, he had produced 67 original pieces. He was

for many years Managing Director of the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, and at various times had shows running at the Garrick, Vaudeville, Comedy, Duke of York's, Criterion, and Adelphi Theatres. In 1903, he had musical plays running simultaneously at the Gaiety, Daly's, Apollo, Prince of Wales' and Lyric Theatres. That was managerial extravagance. The labour of finding artists for five musical productions can only be realised by those who understand how difficult it is to get a first-class company for even one piece. George Edwardes took the labour fairly easily. He used to look a little paler and a little tired for two or three days before the dress rehearsal, but once that was passed, he was himself again.

Four of George Edwardes' productions achieved runs of over 700 performances; two of over 600; and four of over 500. At one time the Guv'nor employed as many as 2,000 people nearly all the year round, consisting of the staffs of his three theatres—Daly's, Gaiety and the Adelphi—and his numerous touring companies that visited about 150 different towns during a tour. In each of his touring companies he had anything from fifty to a hundred people. Piles of scenery and baggage were stored in seven railway arches at Vauxhall. His expenses were always on the same princely scale. He wanted the best and, therefore, the most expensive of everything.

But the Guv'nor did much to improve the conditions under which actors worked. He believed in keeping theatres bright and light, and he replaced the middle-aged chorister of burlesque by the young and charming chorus-girl. The quality of his orchestras was for him a constant source of pride. One of his peculiar business habits about which his friends used to chaff him was his sometimes quite ridiculous overbidding in the salary line. Often his friend, H. Chance Newton, would say to him:

"Why on earth do you offer these inflated salaries? For instance, why are you paying so-and-so eighty pounds a week when you can't use him and have to keep him walking about?"

"My boy," Edwardes would reply. "How foolish you are! You can't see an inch before your nose. I must do that sort of thing to keep other managers from getting these people."

CHAPTER XVIII.

BRIDES FOR THE NOBILITY.

“THE GUV’NOR was not always obedient to his own rules and regulations. One day he had just had the entire back of Daly’s Theatre—scene docks, flies, offices, etc.—pasted with bills threatening instant dismissal to anyone who dared to smoke in any part of the building. An hour or two later, H. Chance Newton caught him coming on to the stage puffing one of his big cigars. Silently Newton drew him from under the “tee piece” and pointed to one of the anti-smoking placards. “Good Lord,” Edwardes moaned, and fled upstairs still smoking. He was at his best when he was at home in his Regent’s Park house at night, comfortably ensconced in a big chair, with his pipe alight. He had his tobacco sent from a little shop in far-away Melbourne, Australia, and would laugh and say: “Ah, you can’t get tobacco like mine.”

An elaborately dressed lady and her accompanist, attended by a footman, carrying her music, were waiting at the stage door of Daly’s Theatre one day, when Sidney Dark, the well-known journalist, had an appointment with George Edwardes, who told Dark that she was a rich woman with stage ambitions, and that she had insisted on singing to him. “I don’t know what to do,” Edwardes said to Dark. “I know she’s no good, but I don’t want to offend her by telling her so.” Then he had an inspiration. He remembered that a member of his company, a young singer with a very beautiful voice, was in the theatre. Sending for her and for Merlin Morgan, the gifted Welsh musician, who was for so many years attached to Daly’s, the Guv’nor told her to go on the stage and sing something, meanwhile sending for the ambitious plutocrat to come down into the wings. “What shall I sing?” asked the girl. “Anything you like, my dear,” said Edwardes, as he hurried Dark into the stalls. The girl sang three or four bars from some song, and then Edwardes stopped her.

“Thank you very much, dear,” he said. “You are quite *good*, but not nearly good enough for my theatres.” The ambitious lady waited to hear no more; she beat a hasty retreat from the theatre.

It never interested George Edwardes that his principals or chorus girls were marrying peers or bankers. He knew them all, yet when they left him he seldom saw or heard from them again.

The Countess of Orkney, Lady Churston, Countess Poulett, Countess Ostheim, Lady George Cholmondely, Lady Victor Paget, Countess Torrington, the Countess of Dudley, the Marchioness of Headfort and the Countess of Suffolk had all been under his management. Scores of others from his companies married younger sons of peers, bankers, soldiers and foreign notabilities. So many girls, former Daly's or Gaiety girls, had deserted the stage for matrimony that George Edwardes was reluctantly driven to adopt defensive tactics to keep his popular and beautiful "stars" out of the marriage market—at least, during the run of the play in which they might be engaged. While *A Gaiety Girl* was on, no fewer than eighteen lady members of the company left the cast to be married. Edwardes decided, I think shortly before he died, to introduce an anti-nuptial clause in all contracts with ladies who lent their beauty and talent to his plays. This clause applied to the Gaiety, Adelphi and Daly's Theatres and his companies on tour in the provinces. The new clause provided that the lady who signed the contract would not be released from her engagements, during rehearsals or during the run of the play, on the score of matrimony.

James Waters of the *Daily Mail* used to tell a good George Edwardes story. "I remember going in with Mr. Edwardes one night to the Theatre Royal, Brighton, to see one of his touring companies in the first performance given there of *The Merry Widow*. We had to be satisfied with sitting on the steps of the gangway in the centre of the dress-circle. Ten minutes after the curtain went up, he began to criticise the performance. He was quite unconscious of being among strangers. 'I have never seen such a performance,' he almost shrieked. 'Order, order!' came from all parts of the theatre. In five minutes he was at it again. Nobody knew who he was. 'Throw him out,' they shouted, and the manager, with tears of laughter pouring down his face, induced me to ask him to leave. When he got to the vestibule he sent word to the company that he was very pleased with them. He had no idea his remarks were overheard."

And here is a George Edwardes story told by Hannen Swaffer. The Guv'nor used to be very generous to his company at the end of a run. When in the summer after the Edwardes tours were suspended, and musical comedy actors met each other in the street, one would notice another's smart appearance. "Where did you get that from?" one would ask. "Oh, the old 'God Bless'" replied the other. "God Bless" was short for "God Bless the Guv'nor." It meant it had come straight out of the show. Some of these splittings up of the props were spontaneous gestures on the part of George Edwardes.

For instance, he said to Marie Studholme on the last night of *Lady Madcap* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre: "You can have that suite of furniture, my dear." That was the whole of one act.

Playgoers in the provinces, in America and all the colonies knew the name of George Edwardes intimately, and honoured it and its owner. Genial and natural, with all the spirit of a sportsman and the politeness of a prince, George Edwardes immediately impressed one as the ideal for the merry monarch of the drama. He was the theatrical hustler, doing a hundred things at once, and doing them right as though by an unerring instinct.

Here is a personal impression of George Edwardes which I think conveys an accurate picture of him. "I had not seen Mr. Edwardes during very many years, but I found him little altered, save for the gathering snows upon his hair, a slight near-born American accent and a few fresh crow's-feet at the edge of his twinkling eyes. His expression was as alert as ever, his instant comprehension of a point amounted to intuition, his sentences were crisp and condensed, yet at the same time lucid and convincing. He faced me, riding pickaback upon a high chair, and helped out all his observations by an eloquence of gesture unusual in an Englishman. When he was sarcastic, he pressed his forefinger to the side of his nose like Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria; for extraordinary emphasis he pressed down his thumb like the President of gladiatorial games."

Once asked if he would choose the same life if he had his life over again, the Guv'nor replied: "With all the bitter disappointments I have known, with all the reverses and with all the victories and unexpected successes, the life I chose is the life I would choose if I had my path to tread again. I have never regretted the day I went down to Leicester to take over that acting manager's job, and I have never ceased to be grateful for the chance that set me out on my eventful career."

George Edwardes married Julia Gwynne, a charming actress, who appeared in the first productions of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Iolanthe* and *Patience*.

Like many others in the theatrical profession, George Edwardes took a great interest in the Turf, and he was practically inspired in this direction by the doings of his sporting brother, Major Edwardes, who took an active part in racing, hunting and polo. Other owners of racehorses who are or were prominent members of the theatrical profession include Frank Curzon, whose horse Call Boy won the Derby in 1927, G. P. Huntley, James White, Tom Walls whose horse April the Fifth won the Derby in 1932, Nelson Keys, Mrs. Langtry,

Sir Alfred Butt, John McCormack, and George Formby, Jr. George, of course, knows all about racehorses and tracks. In his youth he was a jockey and rode for Lord Derby and Lord Stanley, as well as for his own father. In August, 1938, George was granted a licence to ride under Pony Turf Club rules.

Perhaps the gambling spirit links the theatrical profession to the Turf. Producing a musical comedy is certainly as big a gamble as Turf betting or forming a syndicate to exploit a system at Monte Carlo. In either case you may exhaust your bank before the run of luck comes along. But—as Lee Ephraim once said, there are fortunes to be made in musical comedy. *Rose Marie*, *No, No, Nanette*, *The Merry Widow* and *The Maid of the Mountains* are cases in point.

“I am credited with making a financial success of every play I put on,” George Edwardes said in 1904, “but I can assure you that as far as London is concerned, no theatre produced a sequel of profitable musical comedies except one, and that one is the Gaiety. Like many other managers, I have to pay my rent and other expenses when the theatre is closed. Therefore, like other managers, I often keep a piece going at a loss until I think the proper time has arrived for producing a new play. No, London is not a source of profit to the producer of musical plays, because the salaries and rents are so enormous. That is my experience. It pays, of course, to produce in London, because the advertisement given to the piece by people who have seen it gives an enormous help to the companies I send to the provinces, America, Africa and Australia.”

For a long time *The Merry Widow* in the provinces brought in £2,000 a week. Correspondingly large profits have also been drawn from provincial productions of other successful plays. *The Sunshine Girl*, which Edwardes considered to have been only an average success, was a huge winner in New York. Conversely, America gave short shift to *The Duchess of Dantzic*, *The Little Michus* and *Veronique*—three of the most tuneful comic operas George Edwardes ever staged. To quote his own words, “There were some weeks during our New York seasons with those three plays when I query whether we took enough to pay the artists’ washing-bills!”

The Guv’nor used to tell a story against himself of how he lost *The Chocolate Soldier*. This musical play, which is a parody on Bernard Shaw’s “Arms and the Man,” was submitted in the first instance to Edwardes, and although he saw its unique possibilities, he decided to reject it because, as he candidly confessed, “he was frightened of Bernard Shaw.”

“I felt that if I produced the piece, Shaw would inevitably go for

me, and Shaw's sister, Miss Lucy Carr Shaw, who is one of the cleverest women I know, upheld me in the idea. 'If you produce it, my brother will be sure to bring an injunction against you,' she told me. 'He will——.' Well, there really was no saying what he will not do, and so I let the chance slip."

Some years ago criticisms of musical comedy were levelled at George Edwardes by Sir (then Mr.) John Hare. The Guv'nor's reply was as follows:—"I am surprised that so eminent a man as Mr. Hare should have talked in such a manner. He suggests that musical comedy is really dependent on clowning. That is absurd. Who wants to go and see clowning? People come to be amused. A comedy, whether musical or not, attracts only if intrinsically clever and if interpreted by clever comedians. You see, in musical comedy, an actor or actress must necessarily be far more versatile. They must not only be able to act, but they must also know how to dance and, as a rule, they must be accomplished musical performers. If they possess only one of these requisites, or even two, they are rarely of use to us. Look at the late Fred Leslie. I know no one who could rival him on the stage. It was not merely that he was funny when he liked, but he could also put in pathos and tragedy and all the subtler emotions better than anyone else. Why, he played *David Garrick*, and did it as well as any actor of the present can do it." *David Garrick* was, of course, Sir Charles Wyndham's masterpiece, and it has been said that he had no equal in the part.

Before continuing my story of the various Daly's productions, I will quote what that great light comedian, George Grossmith, said about musical comedy in 1927.

"Musical comedy, whatever else may be said against it, has proved since its inception undoubtedly the most popular and commercially successful form of entertainment, not only in England and the Dominions but in the United States. French critics of repute and great French actors like the elder Guitry and Réjane expressed it as their opinion that it has provided some of the best of English dramatic artists, if not of English dramatic art. The great German producer, Max Reinhardt, told me personally that he shared this opinion, but beyond all question it has certainly provided a fine school for the drama. Apart from clever buffoonery and interpolations there has been some really brilliant straight acting in musical plays.

"Edward Terry of the old Gaiety Burlesques was an actor of the front rank, as is G. P. Huntley. Fred Leslie (whose career on the stage was far too short) was entirely at the top of the tree, and could in the middle of the most delightful foolery suddenly change his

tactics, command complete silence in the audience and subsequently tears.”

That superb artiste, Gracie Fields, can do that, but in all my years of experience in the theatrical profession I know of no one else.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TRADITION MAINTAINED.

GEORGE EDWARDES'S triumphs at Daly's and the Gaiety have to some extent overshadowed his successes in other theatres. At the Adelphi, for instance, he scored a series of smash-hits, of which *The Quaker Girl*, produced in 1910, ran for 536 performances.

Joseph Coyne—a very good judge—described this piece as the best English musical comedy ever written, and the composer, Lionel Monckton, classed it among his finest work. Since the Adelphi audience first heard it, *The Quaker Girl* has been performed so many times in London and the provinces that theatrical statisticians have lost count. It must be placed among George Edwardes' happiest choices. The Adelphi cast included Hayden Coffin, James Blakeley, Elsie Spain, Gracie Leigh and Gertie Millar.

Autumn Manoeuvres, a military musical play, followed *The Quaker Girl* at the Adelphi in May, 1912, with Gracie Leigh, Louie Pounds—sister of Courtice Pounds—Robert Evett and Huntley Wright in the cast. It was succeeded in October, 1912, by *The Dancing Mistress*, with music by Lionel Monckton. Joseph Coyne and Gertie Millar starred, and were supported by Gracie Leigh, James Blakeley and Mdlle. Caumont. In May, 1913, Gertie Millar retired from the part of Nancy Joyce, which was then played by Phyllis Dare. The piece ran at the Adelphi until October, 1913. George Edwardes then produced *The Girl from Utah*, a musical play by J. T. Tanner and Paul Rubens, music by Paul Rubens and Sidney Jones. It had a run of 195 performances. The cast included Alfred de Manby, Edmund Payne, Joseph Coyne, Phyllis Dare, Gracie Leigh and Ina Claire, who was the youngest actress Edwardes ever engaged for a leading part. She was not yet twenty. As a child, she took part in amateur performances, became a professional mimic in New York when she was fifteen, and, after making a hit in *The Quaker Girl* in the same city, she was secured by George Edwardes for musical comedy in London for three years.

J. A. E. Malone was at the head of affairs at the Adelphi Theatre during George Edwardes's reign. Charlton Mann, who possesses a thorough knowledge of every department of the theatre, was business manager. Joe Coyne, whose last big success was in *No, No, Nanette*

at the Palace Theatre, came to London in 1901 "for the run of a show" and stayed a lifetime. From *No, No, Nanette*, he could look back on a glorious career in London, which began in *Nelly Neil* at the Aldwych Theatre. Edna May was in the cast. He was over seventy when he died. Joe was always a dandy. In an interview, he once said: "No musical comedy now is like the shows of the 'Widow' days. They are good, mind you—oh, excellent—but they are utterly different. In those days there was an endearing dignity about the heroines. And how the public adored them. Edna May, Lily Elsie and Gertie Millar were queens of the earth."

Joe was an astonishing mixture of Bohemian and man of affairs. He spent and saved with equal indifference, and so succeeded in balancing his budget. For 38 years he lived at the exclusive Carlton Hotel and left £58,877. This great artist, whose easy and urbane style in musical plays has seldom been equalled, was born in the Ninth Ward, New York City, which also produced the Tammany bosses, Murphy and Croker, as well as Mayor Jimmy Walker and Gene Tunney.

Revivals at the Adelphi Theatre included *The Girls of Gottenberg* in August, 1908, and Messenger's charming *Veronique* in April, 1915, with Tom Walls in George Graves's original part of *Coquenard*.

But I must shift the spotlight back to Daly's which was now bereft of George Edwardes. After his death the management of the theatre was taken over by the Guv'nor's eldest daughter, Mrs. Sherbrooke, who had, in fact, been in control for nearly two years. After her father died she was assisted by his friend, Robert Evett, who maintained the great tradition with such outstanding successes as *The Happy Day*, *The Maid of the Mountains*, *A Southern Maid* and *Sybil*. The business of the concern was "George Edwardes (Daly's Theatre) Limited," with James White as Chairman of Directors and Robert Evett as Managing Director. Sir Seymour Hicks was then on the Board.

Eventually—in 1922—James White (about whom, more will follow) bought Daly's at a price which, I understand, was more than £200,000. "Jimmy,"—as everybody called White—put the deal through without Evett's knowledge, and it may be presumed that relations between the two deteriorated. Evett, it is true, stayed for two or three productions before finally parting company with White, who, in spite of his inexperience, strove hard to maintain Daly's great tradition.

The first production at Daly's under the Robert Evett management was *The Happy Day*, a musical play by Sir Seymour Hicks, lyrics by Adrian Ross, with music by Sidney Jones and Paul Rubens. It was

produced on May 13, 1916, and ran for 241 performances. The cast included Arthur Wontner, Thorpe Bates, Mark Lester, Lauri de Frece, G. P. Huntley, Winifred Barnes, Rosina Filippi, Nellie Taylor, Eva Kelly, Unity More and José Collins as Camille Joyeuse.

José Collins made a name in America when appearing with Gaby Deslys in *The Merry Countess*, which was subsequently produced in England as *The Night Birds*. Almost overnight she became a star, and would probably have stayed permanently in the United States if Robert Evett, who was in New York, had not pressed her to sign a contract to appear in London. At first she refused, but after much pressure she was persuaded to relinquish her American Engagements. Even then it is doubtful whether she would have come to England if Evett had not sent his secretary over to New York to get her signature to a contract and bring José with him. The outcome was her appearance at Daly's in *The Happy Day* and a glorious debut in London.

A well-known critic wrote of *The Happy Day* at Daly's: "Beautiful, magnificent, brilliant, dazzling—all the old adjectives that used to be applied to productions at Daly's in the George Edwardes days may be applied to *The Happy Day*, with some new ones in addition. For besides being spectacularly lovely and musically delightful, the play actually has a plot." *The Times* of May 15, 1916, joined in the chorus of praise: "It is all very splendid; a good deal of the music, especially that of Mr. Sidney Jones, has operatic ambition, but the poor little story gets lost among all the gorgeousness; and we cannot help suspecting that some of the huge feast will have to go. In Act 2 (Scene 1, which lasts more than an hour and a half) Miss José Collins had two elaborate 'song-scenas,' as they used to be called; and the enthusiasm aroused by the second seemed as great as that aroused by the first. No one would want to spare a minute of Miss Unity More's dancing. As time goes on, Mr. G. P. Huntley and Mr. Lauri de Frece, warming to their work, will want more, not less time in which to practise their engaging villainies. Perhaps, after all, it will be the poor little story that must be sacrificed. But we hope that nothing will be lost of the princely Mr. Wontner, nor that of trenchant Mistress of the Robes, so masterfully played by Miss Rosina Filippi."

G. P. Huntley's appearance in *The Happy Day* was his last at Daly's. His career on the stage may be said to have been predestined, for both his father and mother were members of the theatrical profession. He toured for four years with the Kendals. *Kitty Grey*, produced by George Edwardes at the Apollo Theatre in September, 1901, for a run of 220 performances, brought Huntley into the front

rank with a bound ; and his Lord Cheyne in *Three Little Maids* clinched his reputation. This Paul Rubens musical play was produced by George Edwardes at the Apollo Theatre in May, 1902, and ran for 348 performances.

A light comedian unsurpassed in his own particular line, Huntley at his best was always vastly amusing. Asked one day by a New York reporter to give his recipe for being funny, he replied with one word—"liverish." "Eat anything that will upset you quickly," he added. "I used to eat clams—loads of them—little neck and low neck. They were all right, but I find Welsh Rarebits more acutely effective. Eat them quickly and very late at night. Then any audience can see the next day that you're suffering, and they're vastly amused, d'ye see?" He died in a London nursing-home in September, 1927.

Lauri de Frece, a laugh-raiser of genius, once played at Bath to the dullest houses in his career. One day an old gentleman in a bath-chair appeared. Lauri in *The Gingalee* did a doll and golliwog duet, with Mabel Sealby, in the course of which he had to snatch something off her head and show her hair tied up in pigtails. Then he would exclaim : "You're like a white rabbit" ; but on this particular evening he changed the line to "You're like a pump-room attendant." The old gentleman burst out laughing; had a haemorrhage, and was taken out of the theatre, dying later—"the first and last laugh in Bath that time," Lauri used to say.

The Happy Day was Paul Rubens's last musical comedy. He was born in 1876 and educated at Winchester and Oxford for a career at the Bar ; but his great musical gift soon asserted itself. His first two songs, "The Little Chinchilla" and "The China Egg" were sung in 1895 by Ellaline Terriss in *The Shop Girl* at the Gaiety. She paid a warm tribute to Rubens in her book : "The most charming manners and most delightful man. He remained quite unspoiled even when success was showered on him. He was always very delicate, and his death left a blank in the musical comedy world which has never been filled."

Paul Rubens, like Noel Coward and Ivor Novello, sometimes wrote the book, lyrics and music for his musical plays. *Three Little Maids*, *After the Girl* and *Dear Little Denmark* were entirely written and composed by him. As we have already seen, Rubens contributed as well as for Gaiety musical comedies, including *The Shop Girl*, *The Messenger Boy* and *The Orchid*. He also composed *The Sunshine Girl*, *To-night's the Night*, and the Adelphi hit *Tina* in collaboration with Haydn Wood. He was part composer with Sidney Jones of

The Girl from Utah, another Adelphi production, and of *The Dairy Maids* with Frank Tours, composer of the ever-popular "Mother O' Mine." Incidentally, I was at school with Frank.

Rubens's musical output was enormous. With Howard Talbot he composed *The Blue Moon*, and all the music for two successful musical plays, *The Balkan Princess* and *Miss Hook of Holland*. He contributed songs to *Florodora*. He collaborated with George Grossmith in a musical play, *Great Caesar*, which was produced at the Comedy Theatre in 1899, with Grossmith himself as Marc Antony. Sidney Jones once said of Paul Rubens: "He could turn out four or five numbers while I was taking off my hat and coat." In addition to the works listed above, Rubens composed part of the incidental music for Sir Herbert Tree's production of *Twelfth Night* in 1901.

Interviewed before the production of *After the Girl* at the Gaiety in 1914, Rubens said: "It is very easy to poke fun at a musical play, but there are some things which it is unfair to analyse. Few people realise the work entailed in the writing and composing of a musical play, how situations have to be altered to make room for songs, how songs have to be changed to suit situations, how music has to be sacrificed for stage effects, how scenes have to be devised to afford opportunities for this or that artist, how arrangements have to be made to enable the chorus to change their costumes for the next scene, and how actors or actresses have to make their exits early in this or that scene so as to be dressed in time for the commencement of the one that follows."

Gracie Fields, after her broadcast on the Sunday evening of July 30, 1939, following her recovery from her operation, sang Paul Rubens' popular song, "I Love the Moon," which started it on a new course of life. The song recalls one of the most moving love stories of the stage. Paul Rubens fell in love with Phyllis Dare. For three years he travelled all over the country to be near her. But it was an ill-starred love. Rubens had consumption and knew he had not long to live. When death was approaching, he poured out his secret longings in a song which he dedicated to Phyllis Dare—"I Love the Moon." He took it down to Brighton, where she was appearing, to play it over to her. She was so touched by its haunting melody that she sang it that night. It received a great reception.

In February, 1917, Paul Rubens died at the age of forty-one. His song was his memorial to a great love.

CHAPTER XX.

TRIUMPH OF "THE MAID."

AT the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, on December 23, 1916, *The Maid of the Mountains*, destined to be the greatest of all Daly's successes, first unrolled its romantic splendours to the public. It was produced at Daly's on February 10, 1917, and ran for 1,352 performances, yielding its promoters of profit of some £300,000.

Seldom has a smash-hit made its way so inauspiciously. The original version was written by Frederick Lonsdale in 1905. It hung fire until Robert Evett, faced with the bankruptcy of the George Edwardes estates, read the script and scented a winner. Evett had something of the Guv'nor's flair. He called in Fraser-Simson to compose the music, Harry Graham, of the Coldstream Guards, to write the lyrics, and Oscar Asche to produce—a great team. By the time they had finished with the piece, Lonsdale's scheme was unrecognisable.

From the moment the curtain went up on *The Maid of the Mountains* at the Prince's, Manchester, it was booked for a phenomenal success. The audience reacted with the greatest enthusiasm, but behind the scenes a tense drama was being played out. José Collins has herself described it: "When the curtain went up on a more crowded and possibly a more expectant audience than Manchester has ever known, I was in such a state of nerves that Bobby Evett was almost in tears lest I should break down on the stage or miss my cue or do something frightful. The audience took me to their hearts.

"The next morning we were up at dawn to see what the critics had to say. To our intense relief they were almost unanimous in their praise, and one particularly hard-boiled critic actually prophesied a year's run at Daly's for the play. It was played at Daly's 1,352 times. By a very lucky stroke of fortune my step-father, James W. Tate, was in Manchester at that time. He immediately suggested to Bobby, whom he had not met before, that one or two new numbers would improve the action of the play. The result of that meeting was that my step-father returned to the Midland Hotel, locked himself in his sitting-room where there was a piano, and when he came out he had three new numbers written for Thorpe Bates and myself. These numbers were tried out during the Manchester run, and proved so successful that they were retained for the run of the play."

Two of the numbers in question are "A Bachelor Gay" and "A Paradise for Two." The waltz song, "Love will find a Way" is, of course, world famous, as are many of the other numbers.

On July 26, 1939, petitioners at Manchester Assizes smiled when Mr. Justice Croom-Johnson and Mr. Justice Stable were heralded into Court by the official trumpeters playing "Love will find a Way." The Judges were entering to begin the first of a list of 119 divorce cases !

The Maid of the Mountains rocketed José Collins to stardom in England. She was at Daly's for six years ; her association with the theatre ceased as the result of disagreement with James White, who believed he could make a fortune there. One day he said to her : "José, you've got to go." She says in her book that she was determined to have the last word, seeing that it was she and Bobby Evett who had put Daly's on the map again. Striding towards White with outstretched arm, she said : "I have gipsy blood in my veins, and I tell you you're going to come to a sticky end. I am glad I'm going."

If *The Maid of the Mountains* had failed, there would have been an end of the great George Edwardes tradition at Daly's. It was a "sink or swim" venture. Expenses were cut down ; scenery was planned for the smallest possible chorus, and José Collins temporarily agreed to take £50 a week—she had been drawing £500 in America. But the venture did not fail. Even the 778 performances of *The Merry Widow* look small beside the stupendous total of *The Maid of the Mountains'* 1,352 performances, which created a record for a musical play at Daly's, and is second in theatrical history only to *Chu-Chin-Chow's* run of 2,238 performances. José Collins, it is said, grew almost hysterical with the sheer boredom of repetition during the long run.

The cast at Daly's included Lauri de Frece (Tonio), Mark Lester (General Malona), Thorpe Bates (Beppo), Arthur Wontner (Baldassarre), Mabel Sealby (Vittoria), and José Collins as Teresa. *The Times* welcomed the piece thus :

"There were cheers for everybody at the end of *The Maid of the Mountains* at Daly's on Saturday—for Mrs. George Edwardes, for Mr. Robert Evett, the producer (Mr. Oscar Asche) ; for Mr. Harold Fraser-Simson, the writer of most of the delightful music ; for Mr. Frederick Lonsdale, the author of the book, and for all the players. Mr. Fraser-Simson's contribution of the evening is no small one. All his music is light and dainty, some of it quite admirable, notably 'Humour Among Thieves' and 'Live for a Day' ; while one of Mr. James W. Tate's interpolated numbers, 'A Bachelor Gay,'



PHYLLIS DARE
as "Gonder van der Loo" in
The Girl in the Train

Photo—Foulsham and Banfield



Photo—Foulsham and Barfield

SARI PETRASS

as Mariposa

(seen with "Jenny" the donkey with a stage history), in
The Marriage Market

compelled the producer to break through his stern rule of refusing encores."

Another Press comment declared that "the first and third acts of *The Maid of the Mountains* were as good as anything in *Kismet* or *Chu-Chin-Chow*, and that it was the nearest approach to, though not equalling, the best of Mr. George Edwardes's productions."

The Maid of the Mountains still holds its place as one of the world's most famous musical plays. It has been performed throughout the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia—indeed, all over the world.

Frederick Lonsdale first called his script *Teresa*, but after consultation with Oscar Asche—who has remarkable ideas for titles—decided on *The Maid of the Mountains*. Robert Evett aimed from the first at an all-British production. Harold Fraser-Simson, a Scot, wrote the music, and Merlin Morgan, a Welshman, conducted it. The piece made Fraser-Simson's name. His first musical play was *Bonita*, produced in 1911. He also composed the music of *Our Peg*, which did not come to Daly's after its Manchester production and a provincial tour. He did *The Street Singer* in 1924; was part composer of *Our Nell* in 1924; composed *Betty in Mayfair* in 1925, and *A Southern Maid*, besides many songs and part songs.

King George V. and Queen Mary saw *The Maid of the Mountains* at Daly's, and José Collins was presented to Their Majesties. So great was the success that every penny of the £80,000 George Edwardes liabilities were repaid in less than two years.

I do not think it is generally known that José Collins in the early days of her career actually appeared at Daly's Theatre during the run of *The Merry Widow*. George Edwardes sent for her and asked her to take the place of a girl who had gone down with laryngitis. It was a case of learning a difficult song and dance that day and appearing the same night. José Collins did it, and made a success. On the second evening she again "got away with it," and then the blow fell. As she was leaving the theatre, she was told that the song was to be cut and that beautiful Gabrielle Ray was going to speak the few words of dialogue. José wrote later: "I cried my heart out in George Graves' dressing-room, and he told me that when I had had one or two knocks like that I should be a great artiste. Then suddenly I pulled myself together, and looking him in the eyes, I said, 'Mr. Graves, one day I'm coming back here, and when I do it will be as a star!'"

It was ten years before that prophecy came true, but she did come back as a star—one of the most scintillating Daly's has ever known.

José Collins is the daughter of Lottie Collins of "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay" fame. Always in a prominent position on her dressing-table was an old-time photograph of her famous mother, of whom she was very proud. By a mere accident of provincial touring José, Lottie Collins's second daughter, was born in Manchester, a city which fittingly saw the first night of her greatest triumph.

When little more than a toddler, she began her education at St. Joseph's Convent, Wolverhampton, and at thirteen she made her first appearance on the stage. To her great grief, however, she was sent back to school, for her mother did not want her to adopt the stage as a profession. As a great favour, however, she was allowed to appear with Sir Harry Lauder as his "Scotch Bluebell" in a Glasgow pantomime of *Aladdin*. She was an instantaneous success, and by the time she was 16, she had a big provincial reputation both as a singer and a dancer. At seventeen she made her West End debut at the London Pavilion, where she sang "My Tiny Firefly" and "I've Built a Bamboo Bungalow For You." Pay, however, was poor, and often she had to sing at five halls a night to earn a living wage. Four times since the production of *The Maid of the Mountains* José Collins returned to the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, for new productions of *A Southern Maid* (two seasons), *Our Peg* and *Sybil*, and on each occasion she returned to town to find the West End still clamouring for her. José Collins was married to Lord Robert Innes-Ker (the marriage was dissolved in 1935) during the run of *A Southern Maid* at Daly's.

If José Collins had elected to devote her genius to grand opera, there is no doubt that she would have become one of the most popular of prima donnas. Many experienced critics declared that she would have been a great Carmen. She had the right physical equipment for the part—grace of figure, brilliant eyes, and a temperament essential for such parts as Nedda in *Pagliacci*. But the parts she played in *The Maid of the Mountains*, *A Southern Maid*, *Sybil*, and *The Last Waltz* demonstrated that the critics' views were well-founded.

José Collins achieved other successes in *Our Peg*, *Catherine*, *Our Nell*, and *Frasquita*. She appeared in vaudeville in 1925 or 1926, playing in London and at some of the large provincial towns. Her vaudeville partner was Thorpe Bates. José said that one of the reasons she returned to vaudeville was that she could sing what she liked without being tied down to one part for months and years with the dread of going "stale."

Lauri de Frece was an outstanding performer in *The Maid of the Mountains*. His brilliant career was cut short on August 25, 1921,

at the age of 41. He was taken ill at Deauville Races and died after undergoing an operation for peritonitis. Lauri de Frece had a whimsical and original humour, and contributed towards the success of many musical comedies, including *The Cingalee*, *Amasis*, *The Balkan Princess*, *Butterflies*, *The Girl in the Train*, *The Count of Luxembourg*, *Gipsy Love*, *To-night's the Night*, *The Pearl Girl*, *The Cinema Star*, *The Happy Day* and *The Maid of the Mountains*. He made his debut on the stage at the Gaiety Theatre, Liverpool, at the age of ten, and appeared in every kind of play except heavy melodrama.

Lauri was a brother of the late Sir Walter de Frece, famous in the music hall world, and husband of Vesta Tilley. When appearing at a Glasgow music-hall in the early days of his career, in a sketch full of action, Lauri had to play at break-neck pace. Evidently he was not going fast enough, for a husky voice at the back commanded him to "hurry up." Usually the sketch occupied thirty-two minutes. Thanks to the speeding-up process, however, it was finished considerably under that time. When he staggered off the stage at the end, he remarked to someone: "There seems to be no pleasing that man." "Never heed him," came the soothing remark, "when they say 'Hurry up!' here, they just mean 'Get off! Curtain.'"

Young England, which preceded *The Maid of the Mountains* at Daly's, was a light opera by Basil Hood, with music by G. H. Clutsam and Hubert Bath. Production date was December 23, 1916. It was billed as a "George Edwardes and Robert Courtneidge Production, a New Light Opera of Queen Elizabeth's Spacious Days." The cast included Harry Dearth (Francis Drake), Hayden Coffin (John Oxenham), Frank Barclay (Sir George Sydenham), Herbert Cave (William Courteney), Walter Passmore (Tom Moon), Ambrose Manning (Sam Best), Roy Wilson (Tib), Doris Woodall (Queen Elizabeth), Clara Butterworth (Betty Sydenham), Dorothy Jay (Joan).

"Since its production a month ago at Birmingham," wrote *The Times*, "*Young England*, which was given at Daly's on Saturday afternoon and evening, has grown in stature, as it will no doubt grow in favour. It has added cubits in the way of eight new numbers. One is surprised at the end of the evening to reflect how much choral work there has been; it has all been so unobtrusive and so well justified. The first octet remains the most delightful single number, and there is a quartet with a delicious change of key which runs it close. In the music, generally, while great care has been taken with details, attention has never been diverted by them from the main, broad effects. The orchestra does not advertise itself; you even forget at times that it is there; but it has a way of asserting itself

now and again by some unexpected change, when you suddenly remember how well it has been playing all the time. That is largely Mr. Arthur Wood's doing. The composers, Messrs. Clutsam and Hubert Bath, have collaborated even within the four corners of the same number, so that it is impossible for the uninitiated to tell where one ends and the other begins.

"The dancing is simple and gracious, and the dresses singularly harmonious and well thought out. The play gains much by the level appropriateness of the language; it often uses the vocabulary of Shakespeare, but without plagiarism of the style. Tom Moon, for instance, has points of contact with Falstaff, Sir Toby Beech, and Osric; Oxenham glances, no more, at Jacques and Mercutio; while in the music Ariel walks the stage invisible. But this only means that the play is first and last English."

This was Walter Passmore's first appearance at Daly's Theatre. An excellent comedian and a good musician, Passmore made a name for himself at the Savoy Theatre. He created various parts there and appeared in many Gilbert and Sullivan revivals. He was very successful in parts originated by George Grossmith, Senr. Passmore was first seen at the Savoy in a comic opera entitled *Jane Annie* on May 13, 1893. It was written by Sir James Barrie and Sir A. Conan Doyle, with music by Ernest Ford. In *Utopia Limited*, in 1893, he created the part of Tarara. As the Boy Babe in *Babes in the Wood* at Drury Lane in 1907—1908 he was outstanding. As a matter of fact, Passmore made his first appearance on the stage in pantomime—*Cinderella* at Sunderland in 1881. In the early part of his career Passmore, like a good many other famous comedians, was for a time a member of a concert party. I have in mind also Leslie Henson, who was once in a pierrot troupe at Penarth called the "Tatlers," and Davy Burnaby who was a member of "The March Hares" concert party. Arthur Askey is another concert party graduate.

After the record run of *The Maid of the Mountains*, *A Southern Maid* was staged at Daly's. Prior to the London production, it was tried out at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, on December 24, 1917. H. Fraser-Simson supplied the music, and there were additional numbers by Ivor Novello. The book by Dion Clayton Calthorpe and the lyrics by Harry Graham, Douglas Furber and Adrian Ross.

The Manchester cast included Tom Shale (Walter Wex), Claude Flemming (Sir Willoughby Rawdon), William Spray (Todo), Frederick Ross (Francesco del Fuego), Kenneth Kove (Lord Toshington), Jessie Fraser (Lady Julia Chichester), Jessie Lonnen—daughter of E. J. Lonnen—(Chiquita), Dorothy Monkman (Juanita), and José Collins

as Dolores. The scenes, painted by Joseph Harker, were as follows : Act 1—Market Place of San Gorgio. Act 2—A Café. Act 3—The Orange Grove. Oscar Asche was responsible for the production, and the dances and ensembles were arranged by Fred Farren, who for many years was associated with the more popular ballets and revues produced at the old Empire, Leicester Square.

The Manchester Press acclaimed *A Southern Maid* as a better piece than *The Maid of the Mountains*. One prominent critic wrote : “ *A Southern Maid* is a gorgeous creature, but as full of contradictions as the most provoking of her sex. She lures one into the belief that her end is to be as dramatic as Carmen’s—and suddenly decides to ‘live happily ever after’ ; she revels in a wealth of music which is strangely reminiscent ; she has scenes and situations which, if one did not see last week, one saw the week before, and will probably see the week after next. And yet, while one realises that all this has been done before, it is impossible to do else but succumb to the wonderful glamour of the maid herself. For the Maid is José Collins, and José Collins at her best.”

A Southern Maid was played again the following year at the Prince’s, Manchester, as the Christmas attraction.

When the piece was eventually produced at Daly’s on May 15, 1920, there were several changes in the cast. Mark Lester took the place of Tom Shale as Walter Wex, Lionel Victor replaced William Spray as Todo, the latter appearing as Lord Toshington. Gwendoline Brogden joined the Daly’s cast. Of the music it was said : “ Mr. Fraser-Simson reaches a higher level of technical accomplishment than in any previous work of his. In ‘Love’s Cigarette,’ he has provided Miss Collins with an insidiously tuneful waltz song of which the widespread popularity is easily assured. One of the cleverest numbers is a humorous trio, ‘Wex, Francesco and Todo,’ and an appropriately breezy ditty is ‘The Call of the Sea.’ ‘Every Bit of Loving,’ sung by José Collins, is the work of Ivor Novello, and ‘My Way of Love,’ another of José’s songs, is by G. H. Clutsam. Her ‘Bird of Blue’ is a beautiful number. In fact, the music insinuates itself in a very taking fashion, in which the fine instrumentation helps.”

A Southern Maid ran for 306 performances. Oscar Asche, the producer, made a fortune of £200,000 out of *Chu-Chin-Chow*, the most successful musical play in history, which ran at His Majesty’s Theatre longer than the period of the war—for four years and eleven months. He lost his fortune, and left only £20. John Stranger Heiss Oscar Asche, to give him his full name, was born at Geelong, Australia, on January 26, 1871. Of Norwegian descent, he studied for the stage

at Christiana, and made his first appearance at the Opera Comique Theatre in March, 1893. Twice in the earlier days of his career he had been reduced to sleeping on the Embankment, and picked up odd coppers by calling cabs for theatre-goers. He was a big man, and the only actor who could play the part of Falstaff without body padding.

It appears that both Sir George Dance and Robert Evett for Daly's turned down *Chu-Chin-Chow*. Dance consoled Asche by saying: "If you can get George Graves to play Ali Baba, it might be done as a pantomime in the provinces." Robert Evett kept it a month; he told Asche it was no good. "You'll only waste money on it, Oscar," he said. It was a Himalayan miscalculation. According to the autobiography "Oscar Asche, by Himself," it netted between £3,000,000 and £3,500,000.

Asche describes how a wet day had inspired him to write *Chu-Chin-Chow*. He was in a play with his wife, Lily Brayton, (whom he met at Scarborough when she sought her first theatrical engagement with the Benson Company) at Manchester. They had set out to play golf, but the rain forced them to turn back. "What the devil is one to do here all the week?" groused Asche. "Why not write the pantomime you're always talking about?" Lily Brayton suggested. "I will," he said, and half of it was done in a succession of wet days.

Oscar Asche died in March, 1936. He was a fine producer. *Chu-Chin-Chow* succeeded largely on production merit.

CHAPTER XXI.

MORE DALY'S RECRUITS.

THE First World War was over and theatrical managers began to look around for new worlds to conquer in the peace. During the war the theatre as a whole had experienced a tremendous boom. What were the prospects now? No one could foresee the new trends that were to show themselves in the early nineteen-twenties; and the safest course was to avoid the experimental and stick to tradition. At least, that was the policy at Daly's, and it was confirmed when *Sybil* was produced there on February 19, 1921.

This musical play had its first production at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester. The script was Harry Graham's, the music Victor Jacobi's. Seymour Hicks produced. At Manchester the cast included Harry Welchman (the Grand Duke Constantine), William Spray (Poise), Noel Leyland (Capt. Paul Petrov), Jean Stirling (the Grand Duchess Anna Pavlovna), Veronica Brady (Margot), and José Collins as Sybil Renaud.

At Daly's, where the piece ran for 346 performances, Huntley Wright took up the part of Poise and May Beatty appeared as Margot. Leonard Mackay also joined the cast in the part of the Governor, which was played at Manchester by Tom A. Shale.

Victor Jacobi's music, whether grave or gay, is first-class. His melodies to several of the tender love-lyrics are perfect of their kind—for instance, *Sybil*'s opening number. *Sybil* was well received by the Press. The following is a typical reaction:

"There are few actresses on the musical comedy stage to-day who possess both vocal and histrionic ability, and Miss José Collins has won her place at the top of the ladder by sheer ability. From the moment of her first appearance, when she sits at a table and sings the letter of farewell which she is writing to her lover, to the last, when the curtain falls as she finishes with a top note of exultation at difficulties surmounted and love triumphant, she is the complete artist. *Sybil* is probably one of the most expensive and extravagant entertainments that the London stage has yet given us."

Huntley Wright returned to Daly's in *Sybil* after an absence of ten years. He had enlisted in September, 1914; gazetted Second Lieutenant in December, 1914; Captain in 1917; and demobilised

in 1919. In the early days of his career, when on tour as a member of his father's company, Huntley played chiefly in drama. Unrehearsed incidents, which amuse the audience, but are often "death" to the victim, sometimes occur in serious plays. In one drama Huntley Wright was a brutal attendant in a private lunatic asylum, into which the hero had been trapped by the villain of the piece. The hero's friends planned his escape and furnished him with a bomb, which, exploding, blows a hole in the wall and blasts the way to freedom. Shortly before this happened, Huntley had to struggle with the hero. One night he did it so realistically that his peaked cap fell off. Lost without his glasses, Huntley groped for the cap—as he thought—picked it up, and clapped it on his head. But it was the bomb—and it promptly exploded. The scene shifters were unprepared, and the wall did not collapse; Huntley did, and the scene was ruined.

Sir Seymour Hicks comes into my story of Daly's again as producer of *Sybil*. He was born in Jersey, and is chiefly of Irish stock, but his father was the only English officer in the 42nd Highlanders. After making his first appearance at the age of nine as Buttercup in *H.M.S. Pinafore* at a Bath school, he decided to become an actor. But he was packed off to be a wine merchant's clerk in the City, without salary and an allowance of one shilling and fourpence a day to pay for train fares and lunch. He did everything he could to get fired, and at last succeeded.

Hicks left home and started his professional career on the stage in 1887 at the old Olympic Theatre as call boy and super when E. S. Willard was the star there. Willard showed Hicks many a kindness; indeed, on one occasion, when he had been sacked during a dress rehearsal for having omitted to wave a white flag, Willard engaged the fourteen-year-old Hicks as his own dresser.

Under the Clock, the first real revue produced in London—at the Court Theatre, in 1893—was written by Charles Brookfield and Seymour Hicks. George Edwardes heard about it, and incidentally about Hicks, went to the Court Theatre, and offered him a three years' engagement.

Sir Seymour's first big success was in *The Shop Girl* at the Gaiety. He was part author with Harry Nicholls of *A Runaway Girl*, produced at the Gaiety in 1898. One of the biggest hits in musical comedy was his *The Catch of the Season*, which ran for 621 performances at the Vaudeville Theatre. In course of time, Sir Seymour became a serious rival to George Edwardes. *The Beauty of Bath* ran at the

Adelphi for over a year. Herbert Haines, son of Alfred Haines, who for many years was musical director of the Prince's and the Theatre Royal, Manchester, and of the old Manchester Hippodrome, supplied the music to Hicks's book. Herbert Haines was a master of melody. *The Gay Gordons* was even a greater success, and ran for eighteen months. The composer is Guy Jones, brother of Sidney Jones.

Sir Seymour has appeared in almost every kind of part during his half-a-century connection with the stage. His Scrooge was rightly hailed as a masterpiece. His range as an actor is amazing. He is a light comedian of genius and a tragic actor of tremendous power. A Knighthood in 1935 crowned his thirty-three years in management. It was a very popular honour. At the time his charming wife, Ellaline Terriss, said: "I am particularly happy that this honour has come at a moment when I am back again working with him on the stage—it is a pleasant reminder of our early stage days together."

Irving once aimed an unkind thrust at Seymour Hicks. "You remind me," he said, "of my old friend, Charles Mathews." Seymour was, of course, delighted, and hastened to thank Irving for the compliment. "Yes, my boy," repeated Irving, "it is of my old friend Mathews that you remind me." Then came a pause, and presently a murmur, "You wear just the same collars."

Some years ago, Frederick Lonsdale and Seymour Hicks were discussing the difficulties of constructing a musical play. They were talking on the subject of author's credits, Sir Seymour remarked: "The fellow I take my hat off to is the fellow who can write a musical-play book. He has to know just how much and how little story he can have, how long he can hold on to a scene and twenty more things you don't know about till you try." Lonsdale agreed. They ought to know. Sir Seymour has written over sixty plays, including, of course, a number of musical plays, and Frederick Lonsdale began with *The King of Cadonia*, produced by Frank Curzon, and went on to write *The Maid of the Mountains*, which had the longest run at Daly's, and many brilliant social comedies.

One of the most successful songs in *The Shop Girl* was Hicks's "Her Golden Hair was Hanging down her Back." He discovered the song in America and sang it himself in the old Gaiety production. Here is his own story: "My song was whistled all over the country, and having sung it six hundred times, I at last fled from it. So it was with feelings of heart-failure that I arrived one summer's morning in Jersey to hear a boy humming its chorus, as he fished for whiting off the pier-head.

"'Her Golden Hair was Hanging down her Back' was the means

of my being presented for the first time to Queen Alexandra, who as Princess of Wales was present at a ball given by Lord and Lady Cadogan at Cadogan House. My wife and myself, Miss Clara Butt and Hollman were asked to give an entertainment after supper. We played a little duologue called 'Papa's Wife.' At the conclusion of our play, the Princess of Wales signified her desire to hear the famous song I was singing at the Gaiety. This made me extremely uneasy. The room was full of royalty; the occasion was one of semi-state, and the *salons* were crowded with guests, who all stood silent while I walked down to the chairs occupied by the Prince and Princess of Wales. I had great doubts whether the words would please the Princess. Although there was nothing shocking in them when sung in a theatre, I was afraid they might not seem quite the same sung to so select an assembly. I therefore said to the Prince of Wales: 'Perhaps, Sir, Her Royal Highness might not care for the song.' To which he replied: 'Oh, I'm sure she would—I've heard it's very amusing indeed. Anyhow, you repeat the words to Her Royal Highness before you sing them—I'm sure they are excellent.' This put me in a dilemma. Facing rows and rows of people in uniform, I stood up and recited quietly to the Princess the words without any accompaniment. At the end of the ordeal the Prince laughed at me heartily, saying, 'I do believe you're nervous!' I said: 'Sir, I'm shaking all over,' and he laughed again, while the Princess, who was suffering from a severe cold, and I'm sure did *not* catch half I had recited, said she thought the words charming and begged me to have no misgivings, but to sing, which I did."

The chorus, for the benefit of those who have never heard this daring classic was:—

Oh! Flo, what a change you know.

When she left the village she was shy,

But alas and alack,

She came back,

With a naughty little twinkle in her eye.

After the run of *Sybil*, *The Maid of the Mountains* was revived at Daly's on December 26, 1921, with the following cast: Bertram Wallis, Peter Gawthorne, Pop Cory, Edward D'Arcy, Alfred Wellesley, Arthur Wellesley, Leonard Russell, Mabel Sealby, Phyllis Large and JOSE Collins in her old part of Teresa.

In his musical comedy touring days, Bertram Wallis conceived the idea of forming a concert party during the summer vacation, and called it "The Musketeers." At that time two plays were running based on Dumas's "Three Musketeers" with great success, and the

idea came to Wallis that a first-class concert party dressed in musketeer costume would prove a draw. He and his colleagues, largely for the sport of the thing, visited Southsea and, disguised in masks, gave open air concerts, which were an instantaneous success. They played for several seasons there until one day the pier caught fire, and "by instinct," Bertram remarked to me: "I knew it was the end of our little gold mine, for by the time the town had recovered from the shock, we had many imitators, who contracted at rates we could not accept."

All the members of this troupe have made names for themselves—among them Arthur Davenport of "The Follies," Herbert Clayton, who originated the part of the "Toreador" at the Gaiety, Talleur Andrews, who made a big hit in the leading tenor part in *The Merry Widow* on tour, James Blakeley of *The Quaker Girl* fame, and others. Herbert Clayton eventually went into management, and with Jack Waller produced *No, No, Nanette*, and other successful musical plays.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW STARS ARE BORN.

THE next Daly's high-spot was *The Lady of the Rose*, a musical play adapted by Frederick Lonsdale from the book by Rudolph Schanzer and Ernest Welisch, with lyrics by Harry Graham and music by Jean Gilbert, composer of *The Girl in the Taxi*. The dances were arranged by A. H. Majilton, F. J. Blackman produced, and Arthur Wood was the musical director.

Again, a run-in at the Prince's, Manchester, on December 26, 1921—which had now become a formula—preceded the Daly's production. The Manchester cast was as follows: Harry Welchman (Colonel Belovar), Roy Royston (Count Adrian Beltrami), Leonard Mackay (Baron Sprotti-Sprotti), Walter Butler (Count Isolani), Donald Fergusson (Captain Stogan), Frank Atkinson (Dostal), R. J. Macaulay (Mirko), and Huntley Wright as Suitangi. Ivy Tresmand appeared as Sophia Lavalle, Winnie Collins as Rosina and Phyllis Dare as Mariana.

The idea of a first production in Manchester prior to the London premiere has for some years been very popular. C. B. Cochran once said on the subject: "I should never want to forsake Manchester. They are wonderful audiences, and I remember how good they have always been to me." He believes that Manchester is the best ground for a "try-out" of any show. If an item does not appeal to Manchester, "Well, it will not appeal to London: so something must be done." And here, too, is Noel Coward's opinion of Manchester as a play laboratory. "I always go to Manchester to open when I can. I prefer it to anywhere else in the provinces for a "try-out." Very warm people. Fine pit and gallery."

The Lady of the Rose was first produced at Daly's Theatre on February 21, 1922, and it ran there for 511 performances. The cast was practically the same as at Manchester. Arthur Wood said of the piece: "There were two old friends of mine in the cast. One was a young man who had played his first important part in *The Arcadians*, Harry Welchman. The other, I had watched casting spells over her audiences in *The Dairymaids* twenty years before. At that time she had two fat pigtailed down her back. Her name was Phyllis Dare." The critic of *The Times*, commenting on this production, wrote:

"*The Lady of the Rose*, the new musical comedy at Daly's, carries on the tradition associated with this theatre. Musical comedies are popularly supposed to have no story, but this one certainly has a coherent plot not original, but all the easier to understand for that. It has been adapted from the Austrian by Mr. Frederick Lonsdale. It revolves round the heroine (Miss Phyllis Dare), her husband, the hero (Mr. Roy Royston), and a blood-thirsty warrior (Mr. Harry Welchman). The last is in command of a regiment in hostile territory, and his billet happens to be the castle belonging to the hero and heroine. The soldier tries to impose his decidedly wicked will on the heroine, but everything ends happily.

"Mr. Harry Welchman obtained the success of the evening. It was strange to find him as a wicked warrior rather than a victorious lover, but he entered into his part with the greatest zest, and made a very proper villain indeed. The music was composed by M. Jean Gilbert, who has not lost his gift of tuneful melody. There are at least three tunes that will soon be heard throughout England, and the composer has skilfully carried one melodious motif through the play. It forms the keynote of the play, and returns at times with startling effect."

At this point I should like to sketch briefly the career of the beautiful and talented Phyllis Dare. To be playing leading parts both in musical comedy and pantomime before schooldays are over, and to be a nationally renowned picture postcard beauty at the age of fifteen, is a distinction that few leading actresses can claim. Yet this is true of dainty Phyllis Dare, whose rise to fame in the ranks of musical comedy reads like a romance.

A Londoner, she made her first appearance on the stage at the age of nine at the Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill Gate, in *The Babes in the Wood*. The following Christmas, 1900, Phyllis appeared in Manchester, playing the title role in *Little Red Riding Hood* at the Theatre Royal. Here she attracted the attention of Sir George Alexander, who engaged her for the part of Marjorie in the well-known comedy *The Wilderness*, at the St. James's Theatre. At Christmas, 1901, she was seen at the Vaudeville in the part of Mab in Seymour Hicks's production of *Bluebell in Fairyland*. For some time subsequently she appeared only in pantomime, devoting the rest of her time to hard study in singing, dancing and deportment. Her next pantomime part was that of the Boy Babe in *The Babes in the Wood* at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham; the following season saw her at the Shakespeare Theatre, Liverpool, in Robert Courtneidge's *Cinderella*

as the Fairy Godmother to her sister Zena's Cinderella. Then for several seasons in succession she played the title role in *Cinderella*, appearing at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Liverpool and London.

In 1905 she made a successful debut in musical comedy, taking up Ellaline Terriss's part of Angela in *The Catch of the Season*, following in the part created by Edna May in *The Belle of Mayfair* at the Vaudeville Theatre. Phyllis Dare's delightful dancing and winsome manner won all hearts ; her success was instantaneous and complete. She toured the provinces in *The Dairymaids*, appearing later in the same piece in May, 1908, at the Queen's Theatre. Christmas, 1908, saw her as Cinderella in the Adelphi pantomime ; in the following spring she won fresh laurels by her creation of the part of Eileen Cavanagh in *The Arcadians* at the Shaftesbury Theatre, where she remained for over a year.

It was at this time that she attracted the attention of George Edwardes, and he engaged her to appear in the title role in Leo Fall's delightful musical play, *The Girl in the Train*, produced at the Vaudeville Theatre in June, 1910, the supporting cast including Robert Evett, Fred Emney, Rutland Barrington, Huntley Wright, Madeline Seymour, Kate Welch and Clara Evelyn. In March, 1911, Phyllis Dare appeared in the title role of *Peggy* at the Gaiety, and then George Edwardes sent his *Quaker Girl* production over to the Chatelet Theatre, Paris, in June, 1911 ; she played the part of Prudence, originally created by Gertie Millar. Her next role was that of Delia Dale in *The Sunshine Girl* at the Gaiety in February, 1912, which later went on tour. In May, 1913, she succeeded to the part of Nancy Joyce, played earlier by Gertie Millar, in *The Dancing Mistress* at the Adelphi, where in the following October she appeared as Dora Manners in *The Girl from Utah*.

In September, 1914, Phyllis Dare made her music-hall debut at the Victoria Palace. A month later she appeared in a revival of *Miss Hook of Holland* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, and in the following year she played the name part at the Adelphi in *Tina*. In the record-run London Hippodrome pantomime, *Aladdin*, Christmas, 1920, she was the Princess. At the Lyric Theatre in 1924 she was in *The Street Singer*, returning to the Gaiety two years later in *Lido Lady*. She had parts in *The Yellow Mask* at the Carlton in 1928, and in *Words and Music* at the Adelphi in 1932. Her only appearance at Daly's was in *The Lady of the Rose*.

To an interviewer, Miss Dare once said : " I get numbers of all sorts of letters from men, saying all kinds of silly things : but then

there is nothing unique in that. That is simply one of the penalties of being an actress. Every girl on the stage receives these kinds of letters. It would seem that the fizzle of the spotlight on the actress has the power of fizzling up the hearts of susceptible menfolk. Of course, the letters are not all silly. It is always nice to hear that your acting or singing has been appreciated by anyone; but there are some people who write really as if they were lunatics. There was one man who used to write to me every day for, I am sure, almost half a year. He always used to sign himself 'Your humble and trembling footlight.' I am sure he was a lunatic. He hated my sister Zena, and used to send me postcard photos of her in which he had scratched her face all over. He evidently thought that this would make me very fond of him!"

Speaking about her experiences in musical comedies, Phyllis Dare continued:

"I find it a very monotonous and often tiresome life. The musical comedies themselves have not got much in them as a rule beyond songs and little scenes and conversations leading up to those songs. I would like so much to have a part where one would be able to act in a study of character, or at least feel that one was not repeating silly, empty words. And I have always got to be smiling."

Musical comedies run for long, long periods. Speaking on this subject, George Grossmith said in 1929: "In the halcyon days of the Gaiety or Daly's, if a play was a success it ran for three years; if it was not so successful, we had to be content with a miserable one year," he said with regret—and some slight exaggeration. "In these days when musical entertainment is provided not only by theatres, music-halls and cinemas, but also by hotels, restaurants, cafés, river-side resorts, to say nothing of the gramophone and the wireless, five or six months may be looked upon as a healthy run."

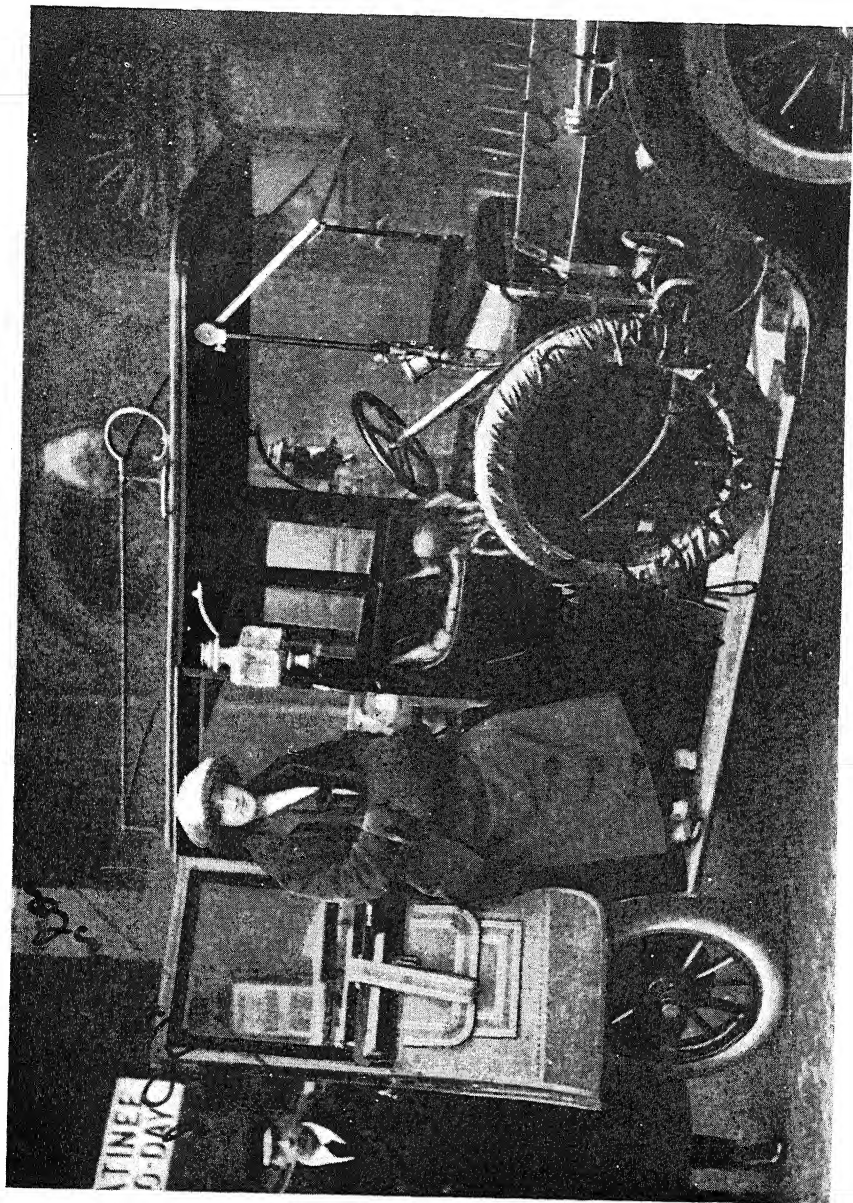
The Merry Widow was revived at Daly's on May 19, 1923, and ran for 239 performances. The cast included George Graves, Derek Oldham, Evelyn Laye in the title role, Ivy Tresmand, Nancie Lovat, and Carl Brisson as Danilo. A Press comment on Brisson's performance said: "He seemed inclined to treat his part as a classic. He has the voice and the temperament to make a success of it if he lets himself go." Of Evelyn Laye's interpretation of Sonia—the Merry Widow—the same Press notice remarked: "Miss Evelyn Laye is as good as her predecessors." Referring to Carl Brisson, Arthur Wood said that before they opened he could not speak two sentences of English, and he had to learn his parrot fashion, yet he put it over with such verve that he got away with it. Wood's comment

on Eveiyn Laye was : " She got her chance—and took it with both hands. She was an instant success, and she deserved every bit of it. Even after her success was assured, she never stopped working to make herself better. One of my most vivid memories of the show is having my rests between matinées and evening performances shattered by Evelyn singing grand opera in the next dressing-room."

Eveliyn Laye started as a chorus girl at twenty-five shillings a week and went on to £1,000 a week in Hollywood. Here is the story of her rise to stardom. She first appeared on the stage at the age of three, when W. S. Penley sent her toddling across the boards in full view of the audience one night. For this she received the regulation pay packet containing sixpence. Her first real part should have been that of " The Runaway Girl," for she ran away from school when she was fifteen to go on the stage. This was partly because she was such a madcap at school that she was always getting into trouble and partly because her one ambition was to own a musical comedy theatre herself. She was at school at Brighton, where her father, Gilbert Laye, was manager of the Palace Pier. It was to a manager of one of the companies that visited the pier that she went, and he became a good uncle to her and engaged her at twenty-five shillings a week. The first her parents knew of the matter was when they were asked to append their signatures to the contract. Their scruples were eventually overcome, and soon the schoolgirl actress had a small part in *Mr. Wu*.

Then she met Robert Courtneidge, and he knocked all the fond dreams out of her golden head. " He made me think seriously about my profession," she says, " and woke me up to the fact that it was not a game, but that to succeed, I would have to work like the —— with both sleeves rolled up." A small part in *O Caesar!* and then she came up against it—she was out of a job. Nothing came along—but nothing would induce her to seek help from her parents ; her independent spirit would not brook it. So she used to get jobs in film crowds at ten shillings a day, telling her friends that she was having a glorious game as a film-star. Another of her efforts to turn an honest penny resulted in more than she expected, for in a sketch as a Cockney servant girl at the South London Palace she had honest pennies thrown at her! The sketch did not survive.

Eventually, she got back into a tour of *Mr. Wu*, and to her joy was given the part of Nang Ping. Then as " Goody Two Shoes " she had a gorgeous time in pantomime at Portsmouth, living almost exclusively during that time on chocolates from midshipmen. Her debut in this piece was not promising, for the white horse on which she made her entrance bolted right across the stage, through the



"THE GIRL IN THE CAR"

A unique picture of Phyllis Dare on the step of her car. It was taken 30 years ago in Manchester where she was appearing in *The Girl in the Train*



MARIE TEMPEST
As O. Mimosa San in *The Geisha*

Green Room, and dropped her at the door of her own dressing-room. After that, she used to bribe it with biscuits. Eveiyn Laye's next appearance in pantomime was as principal boy in *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, in 1938-1939.

While appearing in *Goody Two Shoes* at Portsmouth, she was engaged by Sir Alfred Butt for her first part in London—Moya Mannering's part in *The Beauty Spot* at the Gaiety. At the bottom of the cast sheet were the names: "Miss Evelyn Laye; Miss Binnie Hale to understudy." The second part in *Going Up* followed, and then a lead, Gwendoline Brogden's part in *The Kiss Call*. After that came her first big hit as Bessie Brent in the revival of *The Shop Girl* at the Gaiety. Following appearances in *Nightie Night* and *Mary* at the Queen's, C. B. Cochran secured her for his revues, *Fun of the Fayre* and *Phi Phi*. C. B. is of the opinion that Evelyn Laye is one of the few artists who could actually have climbed to fame on beauty alone. "She seemed to me," he said, "the prettiest girl I had ever seen when I first came across her in her teens." Percy Hammond, the American critic, did not exaggerate in describing her as "the loveliest prima donna this side of Heaven" when she stormed New York in *Bitter Sweet*. Before appearing in the revival of *The Merry Widow*, she worked hard at her voice under Geraldine Ulmar, for the part of Sonia was her first big singing chance.

In the theatre, Evelyn Laye is known as "Little Ray of Sunshine." This title was given to her for two reasons; first, because her father was playing in the play of that name when she was born—her birth-place was Bloomsbury—and second, because it is a description that fits her perfectly. She scored other successes in the Daly revival of *The Dollar Princess* and *Madame Pompadour*; *Princess Charming* at the Palace Theatre in 1927, where she succeeded Winnie Melville; *Bitter Sweet* at His Majesty's Theatre in 1930; as Helen in *La Belle Helène* at the Adelphi in 1932. There was once a lovely creature called Helen of Troy, whose face, the poet said, launched a thousand ships. Her blonde, breathless beauty has become a legend to-day. *La Belle Helène* might find her modern counterpart in Evelyn Laye's classical beauty—which has won a million hearts. Later she appeared in *Paganini*, Franz Lehar's musical play, at the Lyceum Theatre, which alas, like the Gaiety, is doomed. All this apart from film parts in *The Luck of the Navy*, *One Heavenly Night*, *Waltz Time*, *Princess Charming* and *Die Fledermaus*.

When appearing in *Bitter Sweet*, Evelyn Laye met Frank Lawton—son of Frank Lawton of *The Belle of New York* fame—who became her husband. They rode in Rotton Row together, dined together,

and met at cocktail parties. He sent notes and flowers to her every evening. And thus one of the happiest romances of the stage started.

To estimate the amount of money made by plays, songs and singers, has a curious fascination. Franz Lehar, composer of *The Merry Widow*, has received something like £30,000 from his operetta *The Land of Smiles*, while the song from it, "You are my Heart's Delight," has been broadcast repeatedly from more than fifty stations in various parts of the world. Over half a million gramophone records of Richard Tauber's rendering of this song have been sold.

Franz Lehar was asked in an interview: "In composing, do you use the piano to any considerable extent?" He replied: "Yes, and no. Sometimes I put my ideas straight on to paper. At others I press the piano into my service. Let me tell you a little story. On one occasion I wanted to find a particular melody, and from nine o'clock in the evening until two in the morning I sat in my room vainly striving to discover it. But alas! the fount of inspiration had apparently run dry, and so at last, tired out, off I went to bed. At five o'clock I woke up with the tune ringing through my head, rushed to the piano, played it over, and then duly transcribed it. It proved one of the most popular airs I have ever written. Just listen," and with a bound, Mr. Lehar was at the piano giving me indisputable evidence of the truth of the statement.

A propos *The Merry Widow*, the following little tale may be of interest. Just before its production in Vienna, one of the leading musical critics came down to the theatre and demanded, as was his custom, to be admitted to the rehearsal. He met with a blank refusal. But the manager, anxious to pacify him, took him aside and whispered that the piece in rehearsal was of no consequence. In a week's time another piece would be in rehearsal, which he would be welcome to come see. This shows the limitations of experts. *The Merry Widow* ran in Vienna alone for a year and nine months.

Here is another personal recollection of Franz Lehar's. "When '*Rastelbruder*' was originally produced some years ago," he relates, "I had not, as you may imagine, more money in my pocket than I knew what to do with. Moreover, I was something of a novice in the matter of terms. With all diffidence, I approached a friend of mine, offering him the publishing rights for the modest sum of eighty pounds. The expression on his face revealed the enormity of my offence. Nothing daunted, I tried another publisher, who eventually agreed to let me have the sum specified, only, however,

in three instalments, based upon the length of the run of the piece. His £80 brought him in eventually £8,000."

Before going on to the next show at Daly's, there is a story told by W. H. Berry, who was in the cast of the first production of *The Merry Widow* there. "George Edwardes," said Berry, "never liked tempting fate. He would never produce a new show on a Friday, and whistling in the theatre or speaking the last line of any play at rehearsal—that line is heard for the first time on the first night—was taboo so far as the great impresario was concerned. At the final rehearsal of *The Merry Widow* the Guv'nor and I sat side by side in the stalls at Daly's anxiously reviewing a play which was destined to become world famous, although Edwardes had little faith in it at the time. In fact, and I know this statement will astound many old playgoers, *The Merry Widow* was put on as a 'stop-gap.' I turned to the boss and exclaimed enthusiastically: 'You've got a winner here!' He swept round in his chair obviously agitated. 'Don't say that, Bill! Don't ever say that again,' he barked. Then he lowered his voice and whispered: 'Say it's a *nitter*, a *nitter*, Bill.' This was a new one on me, but very tactfully I refrained from asking for an exact definition of the word. It was safe to presume from his attitude of deep concern that *nitter* in the Guvnor's vocabulary meant the exact opposite of 'winner,' which proved, I think, that the impresario was so superstitious that he even shied from the anticipation of success."

About this time the Guv'nor secured a Continental operetta called *The Dollar Princess*. He was anxious to produce it at once at Daly's, but a hitch in the negotiations obliged him to alter the plans. So he put on—as a "stop-gap," mind you—*The Merry Widow*. "I'll give it six weeks, Bill," he said to Berry, and his estimate of its worth may be assessed by the fact that, for the first time, this greatest of all showmen was not prepared to gamble a fortune on one of his productions. The sky was the limit with him always, yet the second act scenery of that colossal success the "Widow" which played to packed houses in London for over two years, and in the provinces, and all over the world—was actually an old set used in a previous Daly's production, *Les Merveilleuses*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOME COSTLY FLOPS.

MADAME POMPADOUR, which was produced at Daly's on December 20, 1923, was James White's next production. It had a run of 469 performances. The book was adapted from an Austrian original by Frederick Lonsdale and Harry Graham. Leo Fall composed the music.

F. J. Blackman, the producer, "discovered" *Madame Pompadour*. After seeing it in Berlin in October, 1922, he telegraphed to James White to join him. Jimmy took a look at the first act and acquired the piece.

The period and *locale* are, of course, eighteenth-century France. The action shows La Pompadour (the petticoated dictator of France and France's King Louis XV.), engaged in an affair with René, Comte d'Estrades, whom she enrolls into the army so that he can mount guard outside her apartment at Versailles. René is discovered there by the King, but the wit and skill of La Pompadour combine to hoodwink Louis and, finally, René is handed back to his young wife, who has not unnaturally been distressed at his absence. René is a stock figure of romantic musical—a loving husband given to roaming.

Evelyn Laye was cast as Madame Pompadour; with her were Bertram Wallis as the King, Derek Oldham as the Comte d'Estrades, Noel Colne as the Court Painter, Huntley Wright as Calicot, Maisie Bell as Madeleine, Comtesse d'Estrades, and Elsie Randolph as Madame Pompadour's maid. The first act takes place in the tavern of "The Nine Muses," the work of Alfred Terraine; the second is Pompadour's apartments at Versailles, painted by Joseph and Phil Harker; and the third act is King Louis XV.'s apartments at Versailles, also the work of Alfred Terraine.

Evelyn Laye scored a great triumph in this piece. "She has hit the top," remarked a well-known critic after the first performance. Another outstanding success was Derek Oldham in the part of the Comte d'Estrades.

Oldham is Lancashire born, a native of Accrington. Under the guidance of his mother he started touring at a very early age as a boy soprano. He appeared at the age of nine with Vesta Tilley (Lady de Frece) in pantomime at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, Liverpool; from fourteen to eighteen, school claimed him, and then he studied singing at Manchester and Leeds.

His first engagement was a bit of luck ; a friend of his, dining with Antony Ellis, heard the latter say that he was at his wits' end to fill the juvenile lead in the revival of the one act Viennese operetta, *The Darling of Diane*. The friend mentioned young Oldham, who came to London at once and began rehearsing two days later at the London Pavilion. He was then engaged by Faraday to play the name part in a revival of *The Chocolate Soldier* at the Lyric Theatre. With the exception of C. H. Workman, whose part he took, the cast was the original one. Derek Oldham was for many years leading tenor with the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company in this country and America. He also appeared in revivals of *The Merry Widow*, *The Vagabond King*, *The Song of the Drum*, *Rose Marie*, *The Desert Song*, *Lilac Time* and *Monsieur Beaucaire*.

After *Madame Pompadour*, Daly's saw on February 4, 1925, a revival of Leo Fall's *The Dollar Princess*. It cost between £6,000 and £7,000 and survived only eleven weeks.

In the cast were Paul England, Edward D'Arcy, Mai Bacon, Evelyn Laye in the title-role, Mary Leigh and Carl Brisson. Carl Brisson in the part originally played by Joseph Coyne—Conder— was described by a dramatic critic as being much too electric, and this lack of repose prevented the part from being as convincing as it should have been. The same critic stated that Evelyn Laye added another triumph to the list that she already had to her credit. She acted the part with intelligence, sang all her songs excellently, danced prettily, and indicated personality throughout.

Carl Brisson, whose real name is Carl Pedersen, was a familiar figure in the sporting world before adopting a stage career. He was well-known as the amateur boxing champion of Middle Europe and Scandinavia. He made his first stage appearance in 1916 as a dancer, and subsequently appeared in revue at Stockholm. His West End debut was as Prince Danilo in a revival of *The Merry Widow* at Daly's in 1923. Subsequently he toured in *Katja, the Dancer*, and made a great success in a silent film, *The Ring*.

After the failure of *The Dollar Princess* revival, *Cleopatra* came to Daly's. It was first produced at the Manchester Opera House in May, 1925, and had a mixed reception. Here is a typical Press comment : " Well, I have been to *Cleopatra*. I should think it was one of the most eagerly-expected shows Manchester has known, and very largely it justified anticipations. But so differently does it proceed from the lines of the usual musical comedy that one begins to wonder whether the term ' musical comedy ' is after all entirely applicable. There is drama in the piece, drama of a kind well-

worn but still well alive, drama of the kind that has received far more halfpence than kicks from playgoers. The personality of the show was Evelyn Laye, of course, and her beauty, her singing and her acting merited the applause she received. The music tickled my palate, certainly, but I had to ask myself whether there was a tune in the piece which any audience could remember. I found one; as for the rest of the music, I thought it bright but not catchy. Jay Laurier, doing remarkably well as Cleo's Prime Minister, had the humour almost to himself. Altogether it was a nice-ish show, and will certainly find thousands of Cleopatrons in Manchester."

Arthur Wood, who was for many years Daly's musical director, told the following story concerning *Cleopatra*. "We were due to open at the Opera House, Manchester, and a week before we went up Jimmy White called for me and said: 'Every time we have a "try-out" the Manchester papers slang their own orchestra. How much would it cost to take Daly's orchestra up there?' I replied emphatically that it would cost a lot. White smiled at my Yorkshire thriftiness. 'We'll take 'em, Woody,' he said. On the morning of the first performance, while I was having a last band rehearsal, a water main burst in the street outside. We looked up to find rivers flowing down the gangways, and since water finds its own level, these emptied into the orchestra pit. By the time the orchestra had saved their instruments and scrambled out, the water was four feet deep. With the aid of the Fire Brigade it was pumped out—or most of it. But the theatre was permeated through and through with the odour of damp and dusty plush. Everything was damp, the orchestra pit especially. In order to make it habitable at all, we had to put planks down, and the musicians kept their feet on these, while three inches of water swirled round their chair-legs. The elite of Manchester, drawn to a fashionable first night, got something of a shock that evening. They arrived to find the floor of the stalls deep in sawdust. As for me, I conducted the performance clothed in evening dress and gum boots.

"It was not an auspicious start, but even under ideal circumstances I doubt if the piece would have gone. You can sense a flop when you've been in the business as long as I have, and possibly it is more apparent from the orchestra pit than anywhere else. By the time the final curtain came down we all knew—Oscar Asche, the producer, Evelyn Laye, down to the youngest chorus girl, that we'd got a flop. They will tell you in Manchester that if a piece can get by with a local audience it can get by anywhere."

Cleopatra, yet another Austrian musical, was adapted by John

Hastings Turner, with lyrics by Harry Graham, music by Oscar Straus and additions by Arthur Wood. Produced at Daly's on June 2, 1925, in a theatre newly decorated for the occasion, it ran for 110 performances. The cast included Jay Laurier (Pamphlos), Alec Fraser (Victorian Silvius), John E. Coyle (Prince Beladonis), Shayle Gardner (Mark Anthony), Henry Hallatt (Nephros), Neta Underwood (Charmian), Ninon Zaria (Iras), and Evelyn Laye as Cleopatra. The London critics were cool. One said: "*Cleopatra* is hardly so good as many of its predecessors, but it may easily be made better. In the programme it is stated that everything has been done to 'capture the atmosphere of ancient Egypt,' and so at the beginning we have slave girls, Nubians and similar ingredients of the 'atmosphere.' What was left of the Egyptian atmosphere last night was soon dissipated, and it was probably not to be regretted, for the thing that mattered was not how 'Cleopatra' ranked as a representation of ancient Egypt but as an example of modern musical comedy.

"On the credit side of the account is the music of Oscar Straus, which pursues its tuneful path throughout the play. While never very distinctive, it is consistently pleasing, and at least two of the tunes linger in the memory. Great parts of the first act dragged sadly, and even in the second the witticisms of Mr. Jay Laurier were pleasant little oases in a rather arid desert of violent talk and amorous song."

As Arthur Wood predicted, *Cleopatra* was a huge failure. James White filled it with jokes about share dealing, just to please himself; he was the only person in the audience who ever laughed at the joke about the "moogs." The failure cost him £15,000.

Katja the Dancer, an adaptation from the German by Frederick Lonsdale and Harry Graham, with music by Jean Gilbert, was the next Daly's production. It was transferred from the Gaiety Theatre in September, 1925, with a cast including Lilian Davies, Ivy Tresmand, Gregory Stroud, and Gene Gerrard. *Katja* was first produced at the Prince's, Manchester, in December, 1924.

Gregory Stroud, who scored a big success in this piece, made his first appearance on the stage as a member of the chorus in a revival of *A Country Girl* at Daly's in October, 1914.

It seems very strange, but, according to Hannen Swaffer, true that Lilian Davies, who was a very good-looking girl with a really beautiful voice, was refused three times for Daly's chorus. Yet, within two years, she was leading lady at Daly's in *Katja the Dancer*. She died in 1932 at the age of thirty-seven, after many big successes, including

the Prince in the Drury Lane pantomime *The Sleeping Beauty*.

George Graves, in his entertaining book, "Gaieties and Gravities," tells the following story: "While I was appearing with Gertie Millar in *Houp-la* at the St. Martin's Theatre, night after night a couple of pretty little choristers used to bother us by chattering in the wings. In a small theatre the slightest sound or even the sight of people in the wings can be most disconcerting. Gertie Millar, an artist to her fingers and a great lady too, not only played right through the interruption caused by these two new hands, but was altogether charming about it all. Perhaps it was on her account as much as because of my own exasperation that one night I tackled those two persistent prattlers in the O.P. corner. 'Listen! If you two don't keep quiet,' I said, 'I'll smack you where you ought to be smacked, and before the stage hands.' They took the hint, and from that time on my scene with the Countess of Dudley was never interrupted. But strange to say, one of these pretty and conversational chorus girls was to appear on my professional horizon. The next time I met her she was playing leading parts at Daly's Theatre, under the management of Jimmy White of tragic memory. For that talkative chorister was the talented and beautiful Ivy Tresmand."

Yvonne was the next production at Daly's on May 22, 1926, after a "try-out" at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester. Percy Greenbank adapted this Austrian piece, and the music is by Jean Gilbert, Vernon Duke and Arthur Wood. Daly's cast included: Mark Lester, Hal Sherman, Horace Percival, Arthur Pusey, Dennis Hoey, Henry Hallatt, Maria Minetti, Mabelle George and Ivy Tresmand. *Yvonne* was described by the critics as a musical comedy of a very familiar type, a colourful show with music fairly well sung, with a certain amount of dialogue that is sometimes funny, fairly well spoken, much beautiful scenery, and any number of pretty girls who trip about and sing choruses.

The story is that of a lover who becomes a servant in order to be near the girl he dotes on, who is herself engaged to marry a man she does not like. Nobody in the theatre was even allowed to doubt how the story would end, but the players with very little help from their authors, sang, danced and chattered their way to the happy climax with great spirit. The most diverting part of the show had nothing whatever to do with the play. There was some dancing by Mr. Hal Sherman, who is supposed to be a waiter. *Yvonne* ran for 280 performances at Daly's. It cost £20,000.

The Blue Mazurka, which was described by Arthur Wood as a "jinx show," also came from Austria. The adaptation by G.

Monckton Hoffs, with lyrics by Harry Graham and music by Franz Lehar, had its first performance at Daly's on February 19, 1927, after a "try-out" at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester. The Daly's cast included Gladys Moncrieff (Bianca), Billie Hill (Gretl Unger), Clifford Mollison (Adolar von Sprintz), Bertram Wallis (Baron Von Reiger), and George Graves (General von Spatz).

The piece struggled on for 140 performances. Arthur Wood said: "It had some of the most delightful light music ever written by Lehar, and all the elements of a smash-hit. Yet for some inexplicable reason the public were apathetic."

"There is no describing the events of those three hours," said one Press notice. "We are in Warsaw, where love may be star-crossed, where everybody who does not wear picturesque costume wears fashionable clothes, where the Charleston has its devotees. It is all pretty, amiable and very innocent. The music is—well, it is familiar by now, but most of the tunes are soothing, and one waltz tune is likely to become popular." *The Blue Mazurka* was certainly a "jinx show." It had bad luck all through, though a new song, "The Black Lancers," especially written by Herman Darewski and sung by Gladys Moncrieff, scored a big hit.

Herman Darewski's ability as a composer was first noticed by Sir Seymour Hicks, when he included one of Darewski's numbers in the musical play *The Beauty of Bath*. Since then Hermann has composed music for over a hundred revues, eight musical comedies and over five hundred songs. He wrote the music for Sir James Barrie's *Rosy Rapture*.

The Blue Mazurka was transferred to a London suburban theatre, but it failed to attract there. George Graves tells the following story of its Manchester production. "I went up to the Prince's, Manchester, to appear in Jimmy White's provincial "try-out" of *The Blue Mazurka*. . . . At that time neither Georges Metaxa nor the leading lady, the young Hungarian singer Fraulein Pechy, could speak English, so the dialogue was a decidedly varied and adventurous combination—up to the last week of rehearsals. I remember we waited in vain for the last act, for Monckton Hoffs (the adaptor), his own keenest critic, will not let a work go out of his hands until he is satisfied with its quality. As time passed, Jimmy sent Cecil Paget, who was then manager at Daly's, to the hotel where Hoffs lived, with instructions that he was not to leave until he had got the script of the last act. Paget rang and knocked, and was at last told by a servant that the author was not in. But knowing the ways of artists, he determined to wait. He hung about outside, frozen to

the bone, for three hours, at the end of which he secured the missing act."

Robert Courtneidge, producer of *The Blue Mazurka*, like George Edwardes, was a genius in the field of stage productions. A canny Scot, he was born in Glasgow on June 29, 1859, and educated in Edinburgh. He had many ties connecting him with the stage. His wife, Rosie Nott, was a daughter of Cicely Nott and Sam Adams, and hence sister of Ada Blanche. Courtneidge made his debut at Christmas, 1878, as a super in one of the pantomimes at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester.

Eventually, in Manchester, he produced many pantomimes and Shakespeare's plays. A man of Socialist leanings, he devoted his £100 savings in helping to finance the old "Clarion" over fifty years ago, when Robert Blatchford was editor and the staff included Alex M. Thompson ("Dangle"), who wrote many musical play librettos. Courtneidge was the first man to pay chorus members for rehearsals and to give his company an annual fortnight's holiday with pay. His many productions include *The Arcadians*, in 1909, which beat the long run of *The Merry Widow*, *The Duchess of Dantzic* (for George Edwardes), *The Blue Moon*, *The Dairymaids*, *Tom Jones*, *Princess Caprice*, *The Mousme*, *My Lady Frayle*, *The Light Blues* and *Petticoat Fair*. He made his reappearance on the boards after an absence of some thirty years, when he took up an old role, that of the speculating Professor Peck, in the revival of *On Change* in 1925 at the Savoy Theatre. On that occasion, George Graves sent him a telegram: "Are you open to accept an engagement as Prince Danilo?" To which Bob Courtneidge replied: "Sorry, but have just signed a contract to appear in *Little Lord Fauntleroy*."

Robert Courtneidge died at his house on Marine Parade, Brighton, on April 16, 1939, in his eightieth year.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"JIMMY" WHITE—THE METEOR.

THIS record of Daly's Theatre has now reached a point where it becomes necessary to deal with the astonishing life of James White and his tragic death. He committed suicide on June 29, 1927.

"Jimmy" White was born to do big business; he pursued it all his life, and the chase of fortune took him to dizzy heights and finally plunged him into the blackest of abysses. Always behind his actions was his character—a compound of business genius, vanity and generosity. In the last phase, he was a tragedy of broken confidence in his own powers. He was born in a humble cottage, but at school he showed such ability that if the master had had his way, Jimmy White would have been embarked on a scholastic career. At the age of ten he had to become a wage earner; his first job was that of a doffer in the ring spinner room of Messrs. John Bright Brothers, a large concern which he subsequently bought and then sold again. Fifty-five years ago, he was a little lad who, in bare feet and ragged clothing, doffed bobbins; thirty years later he was a millionaire and a power in the land. When, in his early days, he was a builder's apprentice, he dreamed of becoming a building speculator.

According to his own accounts, he began speculating when he was nineteen, purchasing the old Rochdale Circus; but his own stories of the deal varied with each telling. If he did sell it, as he said, before he bought it, and then took the profit after completing the deal, it was no more amazing than many of the operations he engaged in later. There are many accounts of his first business venture. At that time he rented a cottage and yard for five shillings a week, where he kept his modest property repairing plant. His speciality was rebuilding firebacks. About this period, he engaged in many small speculations, and in spite of setbacks, he made sufficient money to take him along with some pals to South Africa after the Boer War. There he conceived some big schemes, but could not get sufficient backing, and he and his friends lost all they had. Stranded and penniless, they had to work their way back to England and tramp home to Rochdale from Southampton.

Back in his home town, White worked again as a bricklayer, but was soon in business as an estate agent and speculative builder. His

shrewd judgment stood him in good stead. He could read men's characters like an open book. He knew when to flatter and cajole and when to be rude. Jimmy White once sank a lot of money into a hydropathic establishment, and although his venture was not a success, nothing could break his faith in it. Disaster attended even its opening function. Jimmy always believed in the value of publicity, and issued invitations to a number of prominent people to attend a luncheon party to celebrate its opening. A temporary floor was laid over the swimming bath to accommodate the large number of guests, but, unfortunately the boards gave way in the middle of the luncheon, and all the guests were precipitated into the water below. The tale went round the clubs at the time, and a wag commented: "Evidently, the guests, like their host, were fond of a plunge."

After his bankruptcy proceedings, Jimmy more or less washed his hands of Rochdale as the centre of his business activities. The very next day he told his friends "he would show them what Jimmy White was." Within a few weeks he was in London with less than two hundred pounds, bought and sold a theatre in the South, and carried out several big transactions.

Prior to his bankruptcy, Jimmy White's generosity was proverbial. He was president and vice-president of various clubs and sports institutions. After his crash, I am told, most of them struck him off their lists, with the exception of the Rochdale Cricket Club. Jimmy White never forgot that. In the heyday of his career he was lavish in his subscriptions to the Club. "I'll get you the best cricketers in the world," he said to them on one visit, and he signed up Cecil Parkin. Time after time clubs that had struck him off their lists appealed to him in vain. Whenever he visited Rochdale there was always a hectic night. His guests had the "freedom of the city." Everything was of the best, and champagne always flowed freely.

On one occasion, he brought a crowd of his London friends down to the town, and he took a great delight in introducing them to the pals of his poor days. Labourers and factory operators rubbed shoulders with councillors at his functions. He sent down politicians to address them, gave them boxing exhibitions and balls. The last time he was in Rochdale, in February, 1926, he entertained about six hundred to a dance in the Town Hall, and brought over his company of theatrical stars, including Carl Brisson, Mark Lester, Billie Hill and Horace Percival. Every time he brought off a big coup, he did something for Rochdale—an entertainment or a generous subscription to some local charity or institution. No Rochdalian ever called on Jimmy White without being entertained. A month before his tragic

end, a deputation from the Rochdale A.F.C. called on him in London to ask him to help the Club. He gave them a cheque for £50 and seats in the Royal Box at Daly's Theatre.

In his later days, before he went into any deal, he always wanted to know whether there was £10,000 in it for him. He bought anything, and during the days of the cotton boom he was the man behind the biggest relocations. Not only did he buy mills, he speculated in cotton itself and made money. But in spite of his vanity and his great fall, all Rochdale grieved for him. Anyone who was with him on a deal that failed was always remembered when another deal turned up trumps. It is true at times that his vanity reached the point of arrogance—as when he was “taking a rehearsal,” as he would call it, at his beloved Daly's Theatre. He could never take a rehearsal, although Robert Evett and the rest of the company were quite content to let him think he did. But he would sit on the stage or in the stalls, “direct” proceedings, and become witheringly sarcastic, even contemptuous of what the cast was doing. Yet there was no man who was more liked, no matter where he went. People got to understand his little foibles, and would humour him. By courtesy of *The Empire News*.

In 1914 the City was astounded to hear that Jimmy White had become a colleague with the late Sir Joseph Beecham, and that he had formulated a scheme to buy the Covent Garden estate from the Duke of Bedford. Something like £3,000,000 was involved, and even those who knew him gasped a little. The daring plan turned out a great success. Jimmy was a member of the group that bought the cotton mills of Horrocks, Crewdson, for £5,000,000, and he was also concerned in the floating of the Dunlop Rubber Company for £2,000,000. One of his proudest deals was the purchase of the site of the General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand. An intimate friend of Jimmy White's wrote at the time of his death: “I think of Jimmy White in his Beecham Trust offices opposite the Law Courts; I think of him in his ‘den’ at Daly's Theatre; I think of his lunches; of his uncompromising methods; I think of the manner of his death; and I know that so far as I am concerned, a ‘frill’ to existence has disappeared with him. He once said to me: ‘As a man crosses this room, I can always tell before he reaches my desk if he is going to agree to my proposal or not. I gave ‘em some good shows at Daly's. I always backed my own opinions. If you listen to other people, you will never know where you are. They think you are mad if you don't agree with them.’”

Here is an extract from what Hannen Swaffer wrote on July 3,

1927: "Much more dramatic than any melodrama of the year, much more tragic than any tragedy, a much greater surprise than any sensational show—yes, James White's death proved once again how, besides the happiness of real life, the theatre is a mere place of mummery. A few weeks ago James White was running Daly's Theatre, sitting in George Edwardes' old chair, braving out failure after failure, and talking boastfully of his plans for new plays, new stars, new triumphs. Now the chair is empty. George Edwardes' self-appointed successor committed suicide to save himself from worse than bankruptcy.

"That board room at Daly's saw strange sights; it knew many secrets; it could tell many stories. 'Deals' were completed there and vast gambles planned. Fortunes were won and lost. Yet during the last month James White began to talk, not of *The Blue Mazurka*, of which he was getting tired, but of God—and the coming religious revival. He kept harping on religious subjects. Quite recently he kept Paget, his manager, and the young man in charge of publicity up till three o'clock in the morning arguing about theology! 'You cannot go against God,' he said one night, 'and you cannot go against Nature.'"

Jimmy penned his own farewell, which ranks as one of the most remarkable documents in the history of "De Profundis" literature.

By courtesy of the *Sunday Express*, I am permitted to quote from this amazing human document. It is dated July 3, 1927, and headed "My Last Look at Life":—

"Whilst on the threshold of Eternity, I write my last article, reviewing life from the standpoint of one who is leaving it for ever. In my humble opinion, the old civilisation died on August 4th, 1914, and the new civilisation is not yet born. I have entertained royalty, called dukes and earls by their pet names, been on the inside of politics, owned a yacht, run a large racing stud, owned a theatre, had interests in newspapers, brought off some of the largest financial deals, raised over a hundred and fifty million pounds for various undertakings, promoted prize fights, subsidised boxers, given large sums of money to charity, made over £750,000 in one day, been feted by all and called "Jimmy" White by a world of people. From that it must be agreed that I am entitled to an opinion on life.

"Yes, I have had the thrills of life. I have known what it is to be hungry. I have also known what it is to have all you desire and to have thousands waiting to eat out of your hand. I have felt the injustices of life, and I have had its lucky rewards. I have been guilty of folly, but I have never refused a pal. I have won in a single bet on the racecourse £100,000, and I have played bridge for a shilling

a hundred with more gusto and joy. I have had my own special train to Manchester, yet, in 1900, I had to walk from London to Rochdale for the simple reason that I had not my train fare. I have won the Royal Hunt Cup and many big races. I have known men who but for me their positions would be different. I have known men and women who, while you were useful in cash or kind, spoke kindly and even affectionately of you; and changed to aloofness when your bank balance dwindled.

"On the last day of my life, before my eyes, my brain unwinds the film of the past. In quick succession episode after episode unwinds, and I can now judge that life to-day is nothing but a human cauldron of greed, lust and power. Gone are the nice feelings and contentment, and in their place is a roaring, hectic existence. To-day there are two sects that lead the merry dance, and their followers are legion—namely, the wealthiest libertine and the haughtiest woman. Life is no longer charitable except to the lucky ones. It is one drab day after another, one half of the world seeking new pleasures and vices, and the other half groaning at their lot. At this final moment of my life I look up from my writing and see before me the photo of my wife and our three bonny babes. My wife's eyes seem to be devouring me with love and adoration. My boy's impish smile seems to say, 'Hullo, Dad!' while my daughters seem to be looking from under their eyelashes in a shy blissfulness of love, while their lips seem to be trembling with the kisses they would give me if only they were here. At last I know what life is and why we don't want to leave it. The drabness, the rapacity of it all, is forgetful when in the presence of those you love.

"My eyes again see the photos. Over them comes a film. My head swims. My heart throbs, and I bend my knees and look to God, for I have been guilty of the folly of gambling, and the price has to be paid. God bless you, my bonny wife and kiddies, and also bless those who did not forget.

"Signed: Jimmy White."

The writing of this moving message was one of the last acts of Jimmy White's life. It plumbs the depths of tragedy.

H. Chance Newton, "Carados" of *The Referee*, wrote at the time: "My own reflections and remarks are, of course, bound up only with that of his theatrical holdings. These included not only the running of Daly's, for many years the most famous of the West-End play-houses, but also the maintaining of many touring companies. All these stage ventures were always billed by Mr. White with a characteristic touch of gambling superstition—as run by George Edwardes,

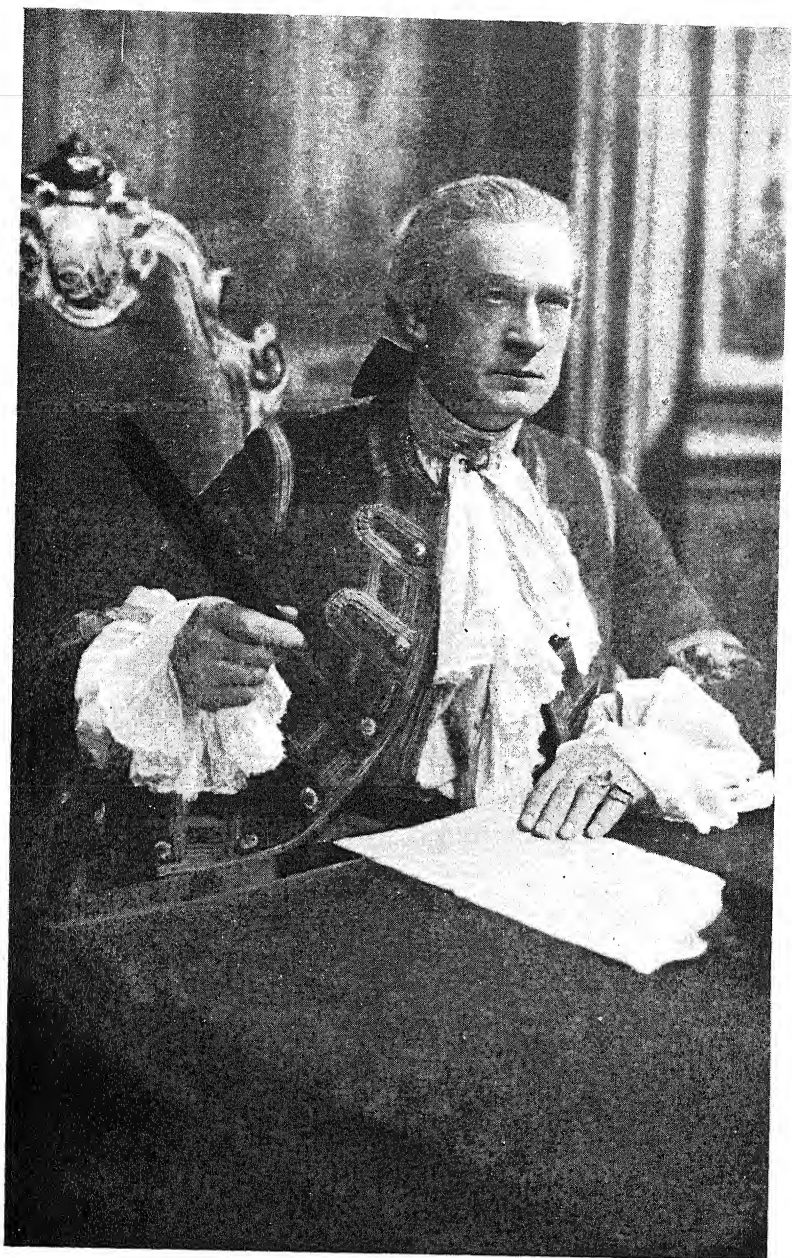
Limited.' Mr. White's own name seldom, if ever, appeared in the billing or other advertising of his theatrical concerns.

"Of late, however, the (as it proved) hapless 'Jimmy' began to evince a kind of craving to 'show off' somewhat in these matters. He interfered over much in the more technical affairs of stage production, casting, etc., matters in which he was, so to speak, as ungifted as he was inexperienced. He began to show also impatience at suggestions from those who know (as, indeed, he seems to have done in his financial ventures) and a jealousy of any theatrical rival near his throne. It was this feeling that caused his split with Robert Evett, who by judgment (plus good luck) contrived to raise Daly's Theatre again into the front rank. James's treatment of Robert concerning the Gaiety (which the former took for a year) was but another ebullition of the former's growing restlessness and jealousy."

How strikingly appropriate are Shakespeare's lines as applied to the case of James White, "ruined and dead at forty-nine":—

"But yesterday the word of Caesar might
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence!"

He was taken to his last resting place, the little village churchyard at Wanborough, Wiltshire, on one of his own farm wagons, on July 4, 1927. The coffin was hidden under a mass of flowers. So passed one of the strangest figures that ever flitted through the theatrical world. He went, but Daly's Theatre, on which he had lavished so much money and energy, survived to go the way of all earthly achievements later.



BERTRAM WALLIS

as King Louis XV in *Madame Pompadour*

Photo—Stage Photo Coy



MARIE STUDHOLME

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SHOW GOES ON.

MEANTIME, the show went on. Less than a month after the burial of James White, *Peggy-Ann* opened at Daly's—on July 27, 1927, to be precise—for a run of 134 performances. The book is by Hubert Fields; Richard Rodgers composed the music.

Harris Deans, critic of *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, declared that it satisfied his demand for originality and that he welcomed it with both hands. "I found it entirely delightful," he wrote. "There are suggestions of Barrie and more than a hint of Gilbert; but how clever of the author to select such models for a modern musical show. The lyrics, too, are always neat and frequently ingenious, while the music was tuneful and ear-haunting. The surest bet in the theatre is the Cinderella motif, and here we get it, with the addition of a reminiscence of 'A Kiss for Cinderella.'

"Poor Peggy-Ann, forbidden to go to the pictures (the modern equivalent of the Prince's Ball, I take it), falls asleep in her master's boarding house and dreams her wishes true. We get a revue touch in the Piccadilly scene, and some amusing fantasy in a shopping adventure in Regent Street. Then, yo ho, and away to sea we go, with Dorothy Dickson feeling quite Christmassy in a Peter Pan episode aboard a pirate ship. A shipwreck, and then to Cuba, where the heels and cigars come from.

"As Mrs. Frost, an unhappily named vaudeville artiste, Maisie Gay has her best part for years. Nat Lewis was a fat and funny figure as a policeman and a pirate captain. From the point of view of the tired businessman, this is a great show. Viewed from left to right, or from right to left, the chorus are a delectable bunch. Pretty and shapely, they dance with a vivacity that is amazing. I guess the number of miles these girls dance in an evening would make a professional athlete feel he ought to be pushed up and down Bournemouth promenade in a bath-chair."

Dorothy Dickson's part was that of a modern Cinderella, the drudge of a country house, who dreams of that never-never London where the streets are paved with gold and where fine clothes and all luxuries are commonplace. Elsie Randolph was also in the cast. *Peggy-Ann* was presented by Lee Ephraim, lessee of Daly's for two years.

It was followed by Noel Coward's play *Sirocco* on November 24, 1927, which was a howling flop. For no apparent reason a section of the audience began to boo from the opening of the first act, and before the final curtain fell there was pandemonium in the theatre. Noel Coward did a brave thing in taking a call. His appearance brought forth a howl of disapproval such as has seldom been heard in a West End theatre.

Hannen Swaffer, commenting on *Sirocco*, wrote: "Noel Coward, who always calls my criticisms of him 'elfin,' is as charmingly philosophical as ever over *Sirocco*. In the letters he sent out thanking people for their first night telegrams, he ended, 'I hoped you enjoyed the French Revolution.' I suppose he means that the company lost their heads."

Noel Coward's play is, in a sense, a sermon on passion. In *Sirocco*, his heroine leaves her husband to go away with a dego, who is no gentleman, and whose influence over her is so powerful that her instincts towards constancy are temporarily broken down. The subsequent discovery of her lover's squalid outlook on life and the sordid nature of their union forms the tragedy of the girl's life—and the climax of Coward's argument. According to a Press criticism, the play was a sketch rather than a finished work of art. It was, indeed, disconnected, and some of the dialogue was extraordinarily naive. The cast included Frances Doble, Ada King, and Ivor Novello the latter's first and only appearance at Daly's.

I suppose no one knows more about Noel Coward's career than that great showman, C. B. Cochran, so I am going to quote him:—

"When Noel Coward spoke of my 'faith in him,' I knew better than anyone else that he did not mean it as an empty or flattering phrase. It took me back to the time when my insistence prevented a despondent and disappointed young man of outstanding ability from abandoning his career—temporarily, at least—and go away to grow oranges in Florida or something equally fantastic. To those who know only of his present assured position as actor, author, composer and director, it may be difficult to remember what his position and his reputation were in 1925.

"After the initial success he had won with *The Young Idea*, *The Vortex*, and so on, Noel was so full of ideas bursting to be expressed, and in expressing them his facility was so great that perhaps he began to work too quickly. There arose a complete misunderstanding of his character and purpose. Since he was a boy of twelve he had been earning his living in the Theatre; the Theatre was part and parcel of him, and he was part and parcel of it. Coward is the nearest

thing to English theatrical genius I have met among his generation."

From *On with the Dance* in 1925, to *Conversation Piece* in 1934, Noel Coward and C. B. Cochran were in collaboration together in a series of productions which comprised also *This Year of Grace*, *Bitter Sweet*, *Private Lives*, *Cavalcade*, *Words and Music* and a revival of *Hay Fever*. With *Bitter Sweet* (1930) Coward became the most popular author and composer in the country.

Equally well known as an actor, manager, author and composer, Ivor Novello is one of the most popular and versatile figures in the theatre to-day. He was born in Cardiff in 1893. So soon as he was old enough his mother, Madame Novello Davies, began to train his voice, with the result that when he went up to Oxford he was able to support himself almost entirely by singing as a chorister at Magdalen College. His successful career as a composer and author is well-known. Like Paul Rubens and Noel Coward, he is author and composer of some of his own productions.

Lilac Time was revived at Daly's Theatre on December 23, 1927, and again on December 24, 1928. The first revival cast was: Christian Veit—W. H. Berry; Baron Von Schober—Percy Heming; Lili Veit—Evelyn Laye; Franz Schubert—Frederick Blamey; Signorina Fiammetta Marini—Louise Prussing; Willi—Evelyn Dene; Tilli—Rose Hignell; Novotny—Robert Nainby; Kappel—John Kelly; Johann Vogel—Henry Raymond. One Press comment said:

"The humour of the Court Glass Maker, in spite of W. H. Berry's efforts to enliven it, remains the humour, rather rough and crude, of the music halls, whereas the rest of the play is a curious and delightful mingling of 1826 with the Edwardian tradition of musical comedy."

In the 1928 revival at Daly's, Percy Heming, Frederick Blamey, W. H. Berry, Evelyn Laye and Evelyn Dene were in the cast again. The newcomers were Maria Minetti (Fiammetta Marini), Lionel Victor (Novotny), Carlito Ackroyd (Tilli), and Mina Greene (Mrs. Veit).

The best thing of the piece was the Marini of Maria Minetti—a study of volcanic passion and innocent guile. *Lilac Time*, loveliest of all musical plays, is by Dr. A. M. Willner and Heinz Reichert, from the novel "Schammerl" by Dr. R. H. Bartsch. The English adaptation and lyrics are by Adrian Ross, from the music of Franz Schubert, arranged by Heinrich Berte and G. H. Clutsam. It is in three acts, as follows: Act 1—The Courtyard of a Lodging House. Act 2—The Sitting-Room of Christian Veit's House. Act 3—A Pleasure Resort near Vienna.

Of all Schubert's compositions, the melodies incorporated into *Lilac Time* were probably the sweetest. To-day this operetta is as

popular as ever, largely because of the marvellous music. The piece has been revived no fewer than ten times, and its popularity in the provinces is comparable only with the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. It was first produced in this country in 1922, and 1933 it was presented in German at the Aldwych Theatre, with Richard Tauber in the cast. In 1944 it was put on again in London and played to crowded war-time houses.

"Whatever his eye beholds, whatever his hand touches, turns to music," so another famous composer wrote of Schubert. In his short life of only thirty-one years—a life of continual poverty—he produced more than six hundred songs, many of them as simple in their beauty as folk-songs, and others full of dramatic intensity, all poured forth from a heart filled to bursting with music. Overtures, sonatas, symphonies, operas, cantatas—almost every sort of musical composition poured from him. His best known works include *Alfonso and Estrella*, *Rosamunde*, and *Fierabras*, and other operas. He also composed much beautiful church music; but it is for his songs that Schubert is chiefly remembered and loved. He could scarcely read a poem without putting it to music. Goethe's poetry inspired a great many of his songs, among them the famous "Erlking." Among other favourites are several from Sir Walter Scott, and the beautiful Shakespearean songs, "Hark, Hark, the Lark!" and "Who Is Sylvia?"

Lady Mary, a new musical play by Frederick Lonsdale and J. Hastings Turner, with music by Albert Sirmay and Philip Charig, was produced at Daly's Theatre on February 23, 1928, with the following cast: "Hatpin" Pinge—George Grossmith; Waghorn—Herbert Mundin; Richard Howe—Paul Cavanagh; Lady Mary—Helen Gilliland; Esther—Vera Bryer; Lady Elizabeth—Dorothy Field; with Jack Raine, Lester Matthews, Richard Dolman, Thomas Weguelin and Harold Fraser.

The Times critic wrote of *Lady Mary*: "The story, it is true, is pathetically slight—so slight, indeed, that it has to be wound up with a most unexpected and inconclusive jerk. But this does not altogether impair the theatrical adroitness and the wit with which it is manipulated. The result of Lady Mary's search in Australia for the heir to untold wealth and an exclusive name matters little beside the crisp humour that decorates the romantic theme. Mr. Albert Sirmay's music is pleasant enough as dance music, and includes two quite ingenious tunes. Altogether a most commendable type of musical play, and, a most diverting evening." *Lady Mary* had a run of 181 performances.

This was George Grossmith's second appearance at Daly's. His

debut there was in *A Gaiety Girl*. "G.G.", who was a son of the other famous George Grossmith of Gilbert and Sullivan operas fame, died in June, 1935, at the age of sixty-one. He began on the stage at the Criterion Theatre in July, 1892, at the age of eighteen, in the part of Cousin Foodle in *Haste to the Wedding*, a musical play by Sir W. S. Gilbert, with music by George Grossmith, the elder. "G.G." had amazing energy in the Seymour Hicks manner; he wrote, composed, danced, produced, and made the most brilliant after-dinner speeches. Under such names as Lord Percy Pimpleton or the Hon. Augustus Fitzpoop, he soon showed signs of rivalling his father. In 1894, he first appeared in a George Edwardes musical play at the old Gaiety Theatre, as Bertie Boyd in *The Shop Girl*, and had a big song hit, "Beautiful, Bountiful Bertie." He appeared in many of the Gaiety successes, including *The Toreador*, *The Orchid*, *The Spring Chicken*, *The Girls of Gottenberg*, *The New Aladdin*, *Our Miss Gibbs*.

During the last war he joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, but apart from a few experiences as a convoy officer, the genial "G.G." was chiefly concerned with organisation. He used to tell a lovely story about being sent to France with a packet of highly secret magnets. He found the brigadier and a large company of officers awaiting him anxiously in the mess. A great cheer went up when he entered the room. He was puzzled. "Where are they?" asked the general. "Here, sir," said Grossmith. A terrible pause ensued. Then the general handed him a telegram. It ran: "Lieutenant Grossmith arriving with forty magnums."

George Grossmith always had a good fund of stories. He used to say that some people have a queer idea of the type of humour needed to ensure success on the stage, and to illustrate his point with an anecdote. A charwoman asked him to find a place for her son in an Alhambra revue. "He's that funny, he'd make you die of laughing," she explained; "you see, he has fits."

In his entertaining book, "Gaiety and George Grossmith," he wrote: "To George Edwardes more than to any other man must go the credit of having invented the one class of entertainment that is better done in this country than in any other. France has provided the world of the theatre with its best comedies; America stands supreme as the only country where melodrama is produced realistically enough to be taken seriously; Italy and Germany lead the way in opera; and Russia has given us the finest dancers; while, thanks to George Edwardes, it is the 'Musical Play'—let our more moonstruck critics scoff as they may—for which Great Britain is chiefly renowned. When a foreign King or his representative in the shape of a Prince

or a diplomatist is received in our midst, what happens (or what did happen)? At once the distinguished stranger finds that all ways lead to the 'Gaiety' or 'Daly's.' A box must be taken for his benefit at one or other of these theatres ; otherwise our proverbial British hospitality would be robbed of half its lustre."

Frederick Lonsdale, part author of *Lady Mary*, we are told, succeeded Pinero as the most efficient of our commercial dramatists. Lonsdale ran away from his Jersey home at the age of nine to join a circus ; he was, at various times, a private soldier, an ocean steward, and a "bell-hop." When he wrote his first play, because his landlady threatened to turn him out of his lodgings, he had the good luck, when it was played at Ealing, to discover that Clement Scott had been driven in to see it by a snowstorm. Frank Curzon always said he "discovered" Lonsdale, but he paid him only two per cent. royalty for the privilege of doing so. Lonsdale had to struggle for years before success came.

On June 7, 1928, King George V. and Queen Mary attended a performance of *Lady Mary* at Daly's, which was given in aid of the funds of the League of Mercy. During the run of this piece, George Grossmith gave a broadcast talk from his dressing-room, which brought him more than four hundred letters. In his dressing-room he had the little yacht piano on which so many popular musical comedy tunes have been composed, a coal fire which was kept burning even on warm evenings, a secretary, and a constantly ringing telephone. In two or three of his long strides, "G.G." was on the stage facing his audience.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A QUARTER OF A MILLION DEAL.

FEBRUARY 26, 1929, Daly's Theatre was under the management of Harry Welchman, and on that date the curtain rose on the first performance of *The White Camelia*, in which he himself played. With him in the cast were Kenneth Sterne, George F. Ide, M. Klit-Gaarde, Charles Barrett, Eric Roland, Conway Dixon—who appeared in the original version of *La Poupée*—Maisie Bell, Sylvia Forde, Lisa Coleman, Dorothy Brunton and Huntley Wright. *The White Camelia*, a romantic musical, with plenty of humour, effective scenes and delightful music, was set in the streets and market squares of Pasadena. It ran until April 20, 1929.

Harry Welchman is a Devonian from Barnstaple, where he was born in 1886. He made his first appearance on the stage at the Royal Theatre, Boscombe, in 1904, in the chorus of *Winnie Brooks, Widow*. He has the distinction of having been a principal boy in a pantomime—Dandini, in *Cinderella*, in 1906, at the Marlborough Theatre, Holloway. He fell under the notice of Robert Courtneidge and was engaged for the production of *Tom Jones* at the Apollo Theatre in 1907.

Welchman had wonderful luck in getting his big chance in *Tom Jones*. He was in the chorus and became understudy to Hayden Coffin, who created the title role in Manchester, where *Tom Jones* was first produced, and in London at the Apollo. After the long run at the Apollo, Robert Courtneidge decided to tour the show—and Coffin would not tour. So Courtneidge persuaded him to stay off one night in order to see how his understudy shaped. Welchman did so well that he played Tom Jones on tour at the age of twentyone—a year older than the Tom in Fielding's novel. Welchman was so successful that Courtneidge engaged him to play Jack Meadows in *The Arcadians* at the Shaftesbury in 1909. From that day he never looked back. His other successes were in *The Lady of the Rose*, *The New Moon*, *Silver Wings*, *Nina Rosa*, *Viktoria and her Hussar*, *The Street Singer*, *The Desert Song*, *The Student Prince*.

The White Camelia was followed by a revival of *The Lady of the Rose*, also under the management of Harry Welchman, on April 26, 1929. The cast included Harry Welchman, Huntley Wright, Leo Sheffield, Greta Fayne (as Sophie Laval), and Marjery Wyn in the part originated (Mariana) by Phyllis Dare.

To quote *The Times* notice : " In *The Lady of the Rose* there is not only a coherent libretto, but a musical plan which is logically developed and reaches a cleverly contrived climax in the second act. There is a flavour of Strauss in some of the attractive airs which are used as leading motives throughout the work. The passing of time has not staled its melody nor dulled its humour. It was Mr. Huntley Wright's night ; his every appearance drew a cheer."

Huntley Wright died on July 10, 1941, at the age of 71. He played at Daly's Theatre more than 5,000 times and his association with George Edwardes lasted for many years. He was a great artist and a magnificent trouser, a mine of theatrical wit and wisdom. He used to say that there were only five jokes in the world ; they were just dressed differently.

Harry Welchman had little luck in management at Daly's.

" It has cost me eight thousand pounds to learn that musical comedy of the old-fashioned sort has no chance to-day," said Harry Welchman in a Press interview, discussing the losses he incurred in staging first *The White Camelia* and secondly, reviving *The Lady of the Rose* at Daly's Theatre. He went on to say—and this was in May, 1929 —" one or two of the so-called musical comedy houses are no longer business propositions. Rents are enormous, the seating is abominable, of comforts there are none. My advice is 'scrap the lot,' and build some new ones, or at any rate leave the shells of the present theatres and reconstruct the interiors. My dream for the future is to have a theatre with seating capacity commensurate with the biggest cinema theatres. This theatre will have all the amenities of a picture house. There will be no charge for programmes and no charge at the cloak rooms."

When I see the name of Leo Sheffield I always think of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. Sheffield had a long and successful connection with these masterpieces. He is a Yorkshireman, born at Malton, in 1873. His first appearance on the stage was at the Savoy Theatre in 1906 as the Second Yeoman in *The Yeomen of the Guard*. He eventually appeared in the same opera as Sir Richard Cholmondely. For twenty-two years he played leading parts in all the operas. I liked his Pooh-Bah in *The Mikado*, and his Wilfred Shadbolt in *The Yeomen of the Guard* best. Leo Sheffield appeared at Daly's in revivals of *The Geisha* (1931) and *San Toy* (1932). He toured as Captain Hook in *Peter Pan* in 1937-38.

In May, 1929, Daly's was offered for sale by private tender ; the owners then were the Westminster Bank, who took it over as creditors

of the late James White's estate. The theatre was bought in June, 1929, by Isidore W. Schlesinger, the South African millionaire, who had varied business interests in South Africa and London. The fact that Daly's was to be sold by private treaty became known, and an offer of £230,000 made by Edward Laurillard, who was then Managing Director of the Piccadilly Theatre Company, was declined. The Schlesinger deal involved about £250,000.

A Russian entertainment, *Le Coq d'Or*, was presented at Daly's in June, 1929, but it was taken off after a week's run.

Eldorado, a musical play, followed on September 3, 1930. It was presented by Messrs. Fenston and Collins. Luckily, Edward Royce, who was connected with the George Edwardes productions for many years, was the producer and Arthur Wood the musical director. It is an all-British piece, although the scenes are laid in Brazil and Argentina. The cast included Desirée Ellinger, Mimi Crawford, Mai Bacon, Betty French, Joan Cole, Flora Hart, Donald Mather, Geoffrey Davies, Earle Stanley, George Ide, Charles Cautley, Mark Daly, Eric Coxon, Jerry Verno, Robert Nainby and Oscar Asche.

This is the description of *Eldorado*: "Originated by Ernest Trimmingham; book by Gerald Robinson and Gus Dale; lyrics by Gerald Robinson, Rutland Clapham and Julian Frank"; and the music, described by Hannen Swaffer as being "worth six of these ordinary musical comedies," composed by Rutland Clapham. *Eldorado* is built round the story of a valuable diamond which passes through many hands.

"The humour of *Eldorado*," wrote a critic, "is not something by which we can tell the piece apart from other musical comedies like it. Its sole distinction is to be found in the prettiness of its frocks and the admirable handling throughout each scene of shades of colour more delicate than we are accustomed to expect from designers of the musical comedy stage. The lovers, Desirée Ellinger and Donald Mather, obediently shrink from originality as carefully brought up children shrink from dangerous heights. They sing themselves into a betrothal, and they discover a ridiculous pretext for singing themselves out of it; they arrive finally at a radiant reunion, and at every turn of this ancient plot the authors conspire to emphasise its ancientness. The penultimate curtain, for example, falls on the too familiar spectacle of a chorus gathering sadly round a swooning heroine overcome by the pathos of the song, 'Love is Dead.'

"The first act finale ends with Desirée Ellinger swooning on the footlights surrounded by the company, grouped in an imposing tableau, with hands outstretched towards her. Two curtains were

taken like this ; then a stage hand would run out from the wings and hold the curtains open for the star to pass through and take her personal call in front. On the first night at Daly's, however, the stage-hand got jittery and miscounted. And no sooner had he grasped the curtains than they started to go up again. The heavy curtains used in theatres are electrically operated, and he couldn't hope to hold them down, so with rare presence of mind he hung on and went up with them. Everything would have been all right if he had kept hold, but half way up he lost his nerve and let go, landing on hands and knees with his face six inches from the prostrated star's. Even an experienced actor could not have saved the situation after that, and the stage hand was not experienced. Instead of keeping his head and walking off quietly, he elected to crawl. So the delighted audience were treated to a first curtain in which the anguished leading lady swooned before her assembled guests, and a second in which the carefully grouped company, still with supplicating hands stretched towards her, slowly turned their heads to follow the progress of a bewildered figure in a boiler suit exiting to slow music on his hands and knees."

Desirée Ellinger made her debut with Sir Thomas Beecham's Opera Company. She had a striking and brilliant career, playing principal operatic roles at Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and later she achieved a high reputation in light opera in *Sylvia's Lovers*, *Helen*, *The Rose of Persia*, *The Gipsy Princess* and *Rose Marie*. She also appeared as Julie in *Showboat* in Paris. When she was appearing as the heroine in the musical play *The First Kiss*, she sold a kiss for five pounds in the cause of charity on "Poppy Day."

Mimi Crawford's (Countess of Suffolk) engagement in *Eldorado* was her first appearance at Daly's Theatre. I remember her as the sprightly little Middy on tour in 1914 in *The Marriage Market*, the part Elise Craven originated at Daly's. She is an accomplished dancer, whose work has lent distinction to a number of West End revues and musical comedies. Her outstanding achievement was in May, 1931, when she danced "The Blue Danube" before King George V. and Queen Mary at Covent Garden Opera House in a performance of *Die Fledermaus*. This was the first occasion on which Mimi Crawford had danced on an opera stage—and the first time that a British artiste had been engaged as prima ballerina for this opera in an international Covent Garden Season. She appeared in *The Dubarry* at His Majesty's, in which she danced two ballets. In 1934, Mimi Crawford married the Earl of Suffolk, one of whose ancestors, the first Earl of Suffolk, was mainly instrumental in discovering the

Gunpowder Plot. The Earl of Suffolk lost his life in 1941 in connection with bomb disposal work. He was awarded the George Cross, posthumously, for conspicuous bravery.

Little Tommy Tucker, a musical play, was produced at Daly's in November, 1930, with a cast which included Gene Gerrard, Melville Cooper, Alfred Wellesley, Leo Sheffield and Ivy Tresmand. Harris Deans wrote of it :

“ How brilliant it was of Desmond Carter to recall the old nursery rhyme of ‘ Little Tommy Tucker ’ and see a plot in it. Change the name of Tommy to Thomasina, let her be of poor but noble parents, compelled by cruel fortune to become a cabaret star (like another Tucker) and sing for other people's suppers, and there you have the perfect plot for a musical show. *Little Tommy Tucker* was exactly as it should be. The plot was so simple that the highest-browed critic who ever annotated an edition of Shakespeare could grasp it. The dialogue, too, for a show of this kind, was always amusing and frequently witty. In fact, the simplicity of the plot is one of the chief charms. If Vivian Ellis has contrived no haunting melodies, yet his score is always tuneful and lively. But it is Ralph Reader to whom the greatest credit must go—Mr. Reader and his Young Ladies. More vivacious dance effects have not been seen. The Astaires may have been the first couple to have perpetrated that never-ending dance round the stage, but Mr. Reader is the first to have seen its possibilities as a mass effect.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

REVIVALS—THEN PANTOMIME

DURING 1931 and 1932 there was a series of revivals of famous old musical plays at Daly's Theatre. I am indebted to J. Bannister Howard for allowing me to quote particulars of his season of revivals at Daly's from his book :

"I am proud of these revivals, for it had long been my ambition to give the London public one more chance of seeing what charm and melody there were in the famous successes of the past. I have, like the bulk of elderly playgoers, a great affection for the many plays that were so popular in the late nineties and the early part of the present century, and it has always seemed a pity to me that so many of them—except for the ventures of amateurs—had so long lain neglected on the shelf."

Bannister Howard recruited an excellent company. On April 2nd, 1931, he started his season at Daly's with *The Belle of New York*. It was a wonderful night, and among the audience were very many old theatre favourites. Edna May, the original "Belle," was there, and Gertie Millar (Countess of Dudley) shared a box with Mrs. McLellan—wife of the author of the "book." Sir Seymour Hicks, Sir P. Ben Greet, Hayden Coffin, George Graves, Will Evans and Jimmy Glover came too to revive old memories.

Leonard Hornsey was the musical director of Bannister Howard's revivals, and the producer was Frederick Lloyd. In *The Belle of New York*, Patrick Waddington appeared as Harry, Norman Page as the "polite lunatic," Kathleen Burgis in the title role, Lorna Hubbard was a captivating Fifi, and Dorothy Ward a dashing Cora Angelique.

On June 1, 1931, *The Geisha* was revived, with Rose Hignell in Marie Tempest's original part, O Mimosa San. Donald Mather appeared in Hayden Coffin's old part, Lorna Hubbard in Letty Lind's part, Mollie Seymour. Leo Sheffield was the Marquis Imari, and George Lane was Wun Hi. Sidney Jones, the composer, conducted the overture on the opening night.

On July 29, 1931, Leslie Stuart's *Florodora* was staged with George Graves in Willie Edouin's old part, Tweedlepunch, the phrenologist, probably one of the best comedy parts ever written for a musical play. Dorothy Ward appeared as Lady Holywood, originally played

by Ada Reeve, and Violet Code as Dolores. Lorna Hubbard and Dudley Rolfe achieved a great success with "Lily of Laguna" as an interpolated number. *Florodora* was one of the biggest hits of the time, running at the Lyric Theatre for 455 performances; it was first produced in 1899.

Leslie Stuart, who died in 1928 at the age of sixty-two, was a witty *raconteur*, a charming companion and perhaps the greatest melody maker since Schubert. He left an unpublished opera called *Nina*. Born in Southport, Leslie Stuart—his real name was Barrett—went to Manchester as a child, and at the age of fourteen was organist at St. John's Cathedral, Salford. Seven years later he took a similar post at the Holy Name Church, Manchester, under Father Bernard Vaughan. "Tell me, Pretty Maiden" in *Florodora* is an unforgettable tune. He was composer of *The Silver Slipper*, *The School Girl*, *The Belle of Mayfair*, *Havana* and various other musical plays, all very popular in their day. His music, which was entirely pre-jazz, had individuality; his melodies were stamped "Leslie Stuart."

Florodora was followed by *A Country Girl*, with Dorothy Ward as Nan, and then came Audran's delightful comic opera, *La Poupée*, with Jean Colin as the doll and Patrick Waddington in the other chief part. *La Poupée* was first produced at the Prince of Wales' Theatre in 1897, where it ran for 576 performances. The original cast included Courtice Pounds and Willie Edouin.

Dorothy Ward, who, as already stated, took part in J. Bannister Howard's revivals at Daly's, started her theatrical career in Birmingham. When she found that a friend of her father was putting on a pantomime at the Alexandra Theatre, she went to him as said: "I'm Ted Ward's daughter. Will you give me a job?" She sang. He engaged her at thirty shillings a week—without singing being required of her! But Fate was working for Dorothy and her precious song, which was "How'd You Like to Spoon With Me?", because they wanted somebody to fill in a few moments while some scenery was being shifted, and she got her chance. Next day the papers front-paged the headline: "Birmingham Girl's Success," and she found herself with an offer from Robert Courtneidge. Things moved rapidly then, and at the age of fifteen she was a principal boy.

Dorothy says that one of the happiest times of her life was when she was with George Edwardes, understudying, at the age of sixteen, several parts in *Havana* at the Gaiety. She prayed—not, it must be admitted, for the continued health of the entire company—and got the chance of playing the lead.

George Edwardes gave Dorothy Ward her first big chance in London

as the Princess in *A Waltz Dream*. After the first performance, the Guv'nor presented her with a quaint ring; it consisted of two large diamonds, set one on each side of a shamrock leaf in emeralds, and was similar to the one he had given to Lily Elsie when she made her first big hit in the title role in *The Merry Widow*. Dorothy's favourite part is Louise in *The Cinema Star*. When she was nineteen she married Shaun Glenville, whom she met in pantomime. She toured among the British Forces in France with the first E.N.S.A. concert party.

Of Bannister Howard's revivals at Daly's, the most successful were *The Belle of New York* and *The Geisha*. The former was first produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre in 1898, and ran for 697 performances with delightful Edna May in the title role. In my opinion, the music of the "Belle" is hard to beat. Gustave Kerker, the composer, was born at Herford, Germany, in 1857, and educated in Germany and the United States.

To celebrate his fiftieth year as a manager his friends gave Bannister Howard a luncheon at Gatti's in November, 1934. He was born at Greenwich on February 27, 1867, and educated at Lewisham College and Ealing College. He sang in the choir of St. Stephen's, Ealing Dean, in the morning, and in the evening he was in the choir of St. Matthew's, Ealing Common. In his younger days he was a noted cricketer, captain of the Ealing College Cricket Club. While still at school, he was keenly interested in amateur theatricals.

Florence Desmond, that brilliant mimic, was once under his banner at the age of ten. He had a now-famous film star at two pounds a week, and he gave a start to Dame Sybil Thorndike, Gabrielle Ray, Ralph Lynn, Alec Fraser, Revnell and West, and Felix Edwards, the well-known producer of musical plays. At one time he controlled fourteen touring companies and five theatres, and has run shows at the Lyceum, Aldwych, Daly's, Savoy, Garrick, Lyric, Vaudeville, Prince's and Strand Theatres. The famous farce, *Tons of Money*, which he introduced to the stage, made a fortune for several people, and its production was a real romance of the theatre. The series of revivals of old musical plays at Daly's in 1931 was really the last important theatrical venture that Bannister Howard undertook. He has had a wonderful career, and I am glad to be able to pay a tribute to him here.

Tons of Money was revived at Daly's on November 28, 1932. *The Times'* writer specially mentioned Leslie Hamilton and Stephanie Stephens in his notice. He also wrote: "The vitality of this farce appears to be inexhaustible."

On July 18, 1932, a season of non-stop super variety was inaugurated at Daly's. It was enough to make poor George Edwardes turn in his grave. Performances were from 2 p.m. to midnight, with prices from one shilling to five shillings, the last performance beginning at 9-30. The programme was in two parts, one of which was devoted to music-hall turns and the other to cabaret. Morris Harvey, one of the original "Follies," was Master of Ceremonies. Louis J. Seymour, too, was associated with Daly's non-stop variety season.

For the first time in its history, a pantomime was produced at Daly's on December 26, 1932, by Francis Laidler, known as "The King of Pantomime." *Mother Goose* was the subject, a very lucky pantomime as a rule. The clown, Grimaldi, first introduced the *Mother Goose* legend as a theme for a pantomime in 1806 at Covent Garden. Grimaldi was warned that he would be ruined by this innovation, but it ran for 84 performances and he made £20,000 out of it. *Mother Goose* at Drury Lane in 1902, was Dan Leno's most successful pantomime. He appeared in the title role, of course. The Daly's show cast included George Lacy in the title role, Walter Amner as Jack, Lorna Hubbard as Jill, Cora Goffin as Colin, Wilma Vanne as Gretchen, Wyn Weaver as Squire Broadacres, Nora and Peg St. John as Ethel and Eva, Dennis Hoey as Demon Discord, Rita Mackay as Fairy Heartsease, Richard Milner as King of Geoseland, and last, but not least, George Queen as the Goose. I did not see this production myself, but I will quote what the critic of *The Times* had to say about it:

"A pantomime at Daly's! Such a thing has never been heard of before. Yet the genius of the place, good Edwardians will be a little mortified to learn, sees no offence in this break with tradition; it appears, indeed, to have gone out of its way to lend *Mother Goose* the lightness and the grace that are associated with the best of Daly's musical comedies. All that pantomime must be, this *Mother Goose* is. It is a pantomime which will please the children, for it gives them all they want in the way of spectacles and humour, and it will please their elders, because, having made its humorous points, it does not dwell upon them and fills up the time gained with dances and songs of the kind that is the staple of musical comedy."

During his career Francis Laidler has produced close upon two hundred pantomimes, in the provinces, and in London at Covent Garden Theatre, the London Coliseum, Daly's and the Victoria Palace.

Pantomime goes as far back in its traditions as the Roman saturnalia, which was also presented in midwinter. The changing of clothes,

the system whereby the Principal Boy is always a girl and the Dame a male comedian, is a remnant of it. Many nations have contributed to the great series of pantomime tales which are founded on fact, fiction, legend or all three combined. Christmas pantomime is regarded as a purely British institution, for no other nation puts nursery tales on the stage at Christmas.

One of the mainstays of the George Edwardes musical plays, Adrian Ross, died on September 10, 1933. He was one of the greatest writers of popular and topical lyrics. The Guv'nor once said in an interview: "As for the material which we present to the public, where will you find anything to equal the lyrics of Adrian Ross? Why, they are as clever as the Ingoldsby Legends or anything Tom Hood wrote."

Adrian Ross in private life was Arthur Reed Ropes, and he was a lyric writer for over forty years. After being educated at Priory House School, Clapton, Mill Hill School and the City of London School, he went up to King's College, Cambridge, where he was a distinguished scholar. A Fellowship at King's came as a natural reward for his academic career, and from 1884 to 1890 he pursued the normal life of a University don, teaching history, and applying himself to the affairs of his college. At the same time he "cultivated poetry" (his own phrase), and published a volume of serious verse. In order to lecture on Frederick the Great, he acquired a knowledge of the German language, which was to prove of great value to him in his subsequent career.

His entry into the theatrical world was a mere chance. A cold, caught while watching the University Boat Race, confined him to his house. During this enforced seclusion, he wrote a libretto in the Gilbertian vein. Back in Cambridge, he showed it to Dr. Osmond Carr. Together they wrote some trial "matinée" performances. J. L. Shine then joined with Ross in re-writing the piece, and it was shown to George Edwardes, who commissioned the three of them to write a burlesque entitled *Joan of Arc*, which was produced at the Opera Comique in 1891, with Arthur Roberts in the cast. From that time until 1922, the year which saw the production of *Lilac Time*, Ross was identified with most of the great musical comedies of those three decades. He was associated with Lionel Monckton, Ivan Caryll and other well-known composers of those years, and with the Gaiety and Daly's.

Here is a sample of one of his lyrics from *A Country Girl*. Entitled "Peace, Peace," it was sung in the original production by Rutland Barrington as the Rajah of Bhong:



Photo—Stage Photo Co.

JOSE COLLINS
"Me and my dog"



DEREK OLDHAM
as Rene in *Madame Pompadour*

Photo—Stage Photo Coy.

When I've quitted my wife for a bachelor's life,
In a pastoral Eastern dominion,
It's a shock to my nerves when the lady observes
She is taking a counsel's opinion.
And although I am well and as sound as a bell
And as bright as a Birmingham button,
I am told a K.C. for a suitable fee
Will declare I am deader than mutton.
Peace, peace, oh! for some peace,
I think all this bustle is wrong,
And I'd like to repose in the sight of the snow
Of the beautiful valley of Bhong.

.....

There's a writer of rhymes that appear in
The Times
Who is down upon football and cricket,
And he pours out his soul on the oaf at the goal,
Or the flannelled fool at the wicket;
There was violence feared when his verses appeared,
But the poet was hardly a dreamer,
When the oafs in the mud came to look for his
blood,
He was off to the Cape in a steamer,
Peace, peace, leave them in peace,
Altho' he may pitch it too strong,
We'll forget how he rails, if he tells us some tales
Of the beautiful valley of Bhong.

.....

Ellaline Terriss (Lady Hicks) wrote of Adrian Ross in her book of memoirs: "That Encyclopaedia Britannica, Adrian Ross, who wrote all the lyrics for Mr. Edwardes' productions, and splendid they were, was always handing me encore verses of a topical nature. I cared as little for politics in those days as I do now, and understanding nothing about them, I used to sing quite innocently lines on the most controversial subjects, and generally, I believe, looked the most surprised individual in the world when I heard boos and cheers, as the case might be, when I had quite smilingly informed the audience that Mr. So and So was either an asset to the country or the reverse."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FINAL CURTAIN.

DURING the early 'thirties—a lean period for new musical plays—there was a further series of revivals at Daly's. It is interesting to speculate on the possible causes of this decline ; but I am of the opinion that less enterprise was being shown by managers than heretofore, and that musicians and librettists lacked the old enthusiastic encouragement.

Whatever the causes—and there were assuredly many—the fact was clear the new productions of the right kind were either not forthcoming, or that managements lacked confidence to embark on large and expensive productions because of a declining faith in public support.

Old favourites figured among the revivals at Daly's. On February 22, 1932, *San Toy*, one of the most tuneful of Sidney Jones's compositions, opened.

The cast included Leo Sheffield as Yen How, Frederick Bentley as Li, Donald Mather in Hayden Coffin's original part of Lieut. Bobbie Preston, Harry Hilliard as Sir Bingo Preston, Walter Bird as Lieut. Harvey Tucker, Arthur Digney as Fo Hop, Conway Dixon as the Emperor of China, Rita Page as Dudley, Brenda Clether as Poppy Preston, Molly Francis as Ko Fan, Susanne Paterson as Wun Lung and Jean Colin as "San Toy."

"Time rests not quite as lightly on *San Toy* as on several of the old musical pieces that have been revived at Daly's, perhaps because the Chinese convention that was once its charm and humour was dependent on a fashion now almost forgotten," a critic commented.

La Poupée was revived again in 1932 with Jean Colin, Patrick Waddington, and Mark Lester in Willie Edouin's original part of the doll maker.

Miss Hook of Holland, a musical play by Paul Rubens and Austen Hurgon, with music by Paul Rubens, was revived on March 24, 1932. First staged at the Prince of Wales' Theatre on January 31, 1907, it ran for 462 performances. The original company included Isabel Jay as Sally, and G. P. Huntley as Mr. Hook. Among the revival cast at Daly's were Jean Colin as Sally, Mark Lester as Mr. Hook, Robert Layton, Harold Kimberley, Walter Bird, John Denis, Hal

Bryan, Alison Maclaren, and Jenny Dean. This revival ran for about a month.

On April 26, 1932, *The Duchess of Dantzic* re-appeared. This delightful romantic opera, written by Henry Hamilton (on "Madame Sans-Gêne"), with music by Ivan Caryll, was first produced at the Lyric Theatre by George Edwardes on October 17, 1903, where it ran for 236 performances.

In the original company were Evie Greene in the title role, Courtice Pounds as Papillon, Adrienne Augarde, Herbert Clayton and Holbrook Blinn as Napoleon. Robert Courtneidge was responsible for the stage production. The revival cast at Daly's included Jean Stirling in the title role, Dorothy Ward as Catherine Upscher, Wilmar Vanne, Nancy Fraser, Walter Bird, Franklyn Tilton and Frank Cellier as Napoleon.

Among the many well known numbers are "Le Petit Corporal" and "The Mirror Song." The heroine is a Paris laundry proprietress, Madame Sans-Gêne, and one of her customers is an ill-paid, young French officer, Napoleon Bonaparte, who remembers the many kindnesses of the beautiful laundress when he becomes Emperor some years later.

When the "Duchess" was broadcast in 1939, Edith Day played the part of Madame Sans-Gêne. *The Times* critic wrote of the Daly's revival: "The producer has not been afraid to fill the stage as full as possible of movement and colour—and the scene in the second act in the gardens of Fontainebleau at the time when Napoleon was at the height of his fame gives him plenty of opportunity—and Ivan Caryll's music has a swing and rhythm which fit in well with the martial pattern of the plot."

Ivan Caryll first came into prominence in 1893, when he composed the music of a burlesque, *Little Christopher Columbus*, at the Lyric Theatre. May Yohe made a big hit in this piece, especially with the song, "Oh, Come, my Love." Caryll, a Belgian whose real name was Tilkins, joined forces with Lionel Monckton in several successful musical comedies. He was appointed musical director at the old Gaiety Theatre in 1894.

Caryll was a picturesque figure. A man of herculean physique, he dominated the orchestra. From his chair, which was placed close to the footlights, he followed a singer or dancer with the eyes of a lynx. He was a great showman, and long after the motor car made its appearance, he used to drive up to the stage door in a pair-horse Victoria. He knew the value of every aspect of publicity, and it was Caryll who insisted on fiddlers tapping their violins when he made

his first appearance to conduct the orchestra. He died in 1921, at the age of sixty.

From 1933 to 1937, when Daly's Theatre closed down for good, the plays produced were of little interest with the exception of Sir Seymour Hicks' productions.

"The first piece at Daly's in which I appeared was a farce, *It's You I Want*, produced on February 21, 1933," wrote Sir Seymour. "It ran for eight months, much of its success being due to the delicious performance of Nora Swinburne and the excellent company, which included lovely Joan Clarkson, Bromley Davenport, dear Viola Tree, Michael Shepley and H. G. Stoker, whom I was honoured to have with me after the gallant services he had rendered to his country as a submarine commander." *It's You I Want* was written by Maurice Braddell.

"The next play I produced and appeared in at Daly's was *Vintage Wine*, on May 29, 1934, an adaptation from the Hungarian by Ashley Dukes and myself, which fortunately was one of the greatest comedy successes in my repertoire.

"In this piece I persuaded that grand actress and beautiful lady, Miss Julia Neilson, to return to the stage, and her triumph as the great-grand-mother is so recent I have no need to comment. I have only to be grateful to her, as indeed I am to Claire Luce, who, after having danced her way into the hearts of Londoners with Mr. Fred Astaire at the Palace Theatre, gave an entrancing performance as the girl-wife of the middle-aged husband, which I played.

The cast of *Vintage Wine*, which ran for 215 performances, also included Stanley Vilven, Gemma Fagan, Patrick Baring, Ronald Waters, Oliver Gordon and Madeline Seymour, who, at one time, was in the chorus at Daly's, and eventually appeared in the title role of *The Merry Widow*.

On October 19, 1933, *Maternité* was produced at Daly's. It was an English translation by John Pollack of the play by Eugene Brieux. The cast included Madeline Seymour, Cathleen Nesbit, Malcolm Keene, J. Fisher White, W. E. Holloway, Karen Stanley Alder, Averil Haley, Kenneth Hyde, Grace Lane, Richard Montague, Dorothy Dickens, Edwin Dodds, Dudley Stuart, Robert Martin, Ellis J. Preston, T. Maxwell Reynolds, F. Johnson Powell, and C. Carlton Crowe. The play was produced by Sir Seymour Hicks.

On November 22, 1933, *That's A Pretty Thing*, a musical farce by Stanley Lupino, with music by Noel Gay and lyrics by Desmond Carter, was staged. The cast included Kevan Bernard, Bobbie Comber, Sara Allgood, Nancy Burne, Pearl Osgood, George Gee,

Jerry Verno, Reginald Hancock, Paul Blake, Henry de Bray, Peter Haddon, Beatrice Macdonald, Peggy Hilburn, Gerald Kent, Roland Gillette, Richard Marshall, John Gibson, Glen Alyn and Arthur Pitt. Fred A. Leslie produced. It ran for about 100 performances.

Apparently, Stanley Lupino was not in the cast. It seems a pity. In my opinion, Stanley was a fine comedian, both on the stage and on the screen. He died on June 10, 1942, at the age of forty-eight. A member of a family whose associations with the English stage go back to the seventeenth century, Stanley Lupino's name has always been associated with musical comedy and pantomime. He made his first appearance at the age of six as a monkey in a pantomime at Hoxton. Brother of Barry Lupino, father of Ida Lupino, the film star, and a cousin of Lupino Lane, Stanley is reported to have seen the ghost of Dan Leno. Here is the story:

He was appearing in pantomime at Drury Lane Theatre, and was using Dan Leno's old dressing-room. One particular night as the weather was bad he decided to sleep in his dressing-room instead of driving home in his car. He locked the doors of his room, turned out the light and settled down to sleep on the couch. "Suddenly," he said, "I became conscious of another presence in the room, and I heard the sound of a curtain which covered some clothes being thrown back. I distinctly saw a form flit across the dressing-room and disappear through the locked door. I opened the door and spoke to the night watchman, who said he had seen nothing. Feeling puzzled, I went back to my couch, but soon after I was again startled. Looking up, I saw the face of Dan Leno. Feeling terrified, I rushed out of the theatre and spent the rest of the night at the Globe Hotel." Strange to say, Stanley Lupino is buried at Lambeth Cemetery, Tooting, only $5\frac{1}{4}$ yards away from Dan Leno's grave.

A comedy by P. G. Wodehouse, entitled *Good Morning, Bill*, was put on at Daly's on March 20, 1934. The cast included Mary Godwin, Lawrence Grossmith, Phyllis Monkman, Peter Haddon, Henry Thomas, Winifred Shotter and Sebastian Smith. It was produced by Reginald Bach. The piece was originally produced at the Duke of York's Theatre on November 28, 1927.

A play by Denison Clift and Frank Gregory, *The Moon is Red*, opened at Daly's on December 4, 1934. The cast included Olga Katzin, Geo. Richards, Francis Waring, Joyce Bland, George Curzon, Hugh Miller, Patrick Baring, Eille Norwood, Gerald Rawlinson, Godfrey Bond, Austin Trevor. Frank Gregory, who produced the piece, was educated and born in Manchester. He was originally intended for the law, but went on the stage in 1900, walking on at

the old Queen's Theatre, Manchester, in a Shakespearean production.

Charley's Aunt, which needs no introduction or comment, was revived at Daly's on December 22, 1934, for the Christmas season, with Dudley Rolph in the title role. Production was by Amy Brandon-Thomas, daughter of the author.

On July 1, 1935, *Le Nouveau Testament*, a comedy by Sacha Guitry was presented. The cast included the author, who also produced it; and on July 8, a play by the same author, entitled *Mon Double et ma Moitié*, was staged at Daly's. The cast included Sacha Guitry, Gaston Severin, Jacqueline Delubac, and Pauline Carton.

The Unguarded Hour, by Bernard Merivale, from a play by Ladislaus Fodor, was produced at Daly's on July 31, 1935, with Godfrey Tearle, Robert Gilbert, Atholl Fleming, Carl Hasbord, E. Vivian Reynolds, Malcolm Keen, Rachel Berendt, Margaret Damer, Ronald Simpson, Noel Dainton, Jane Thaw, Malcolm Tearle, R. Halliday Mason, Rupert Siddons, William Gordon, Regina West, Cyril Chamberlain, and George Elton in the cast. George was a son of William Elton, who was associated with the glorious days at the old Gaiety Theatre as a member of the wonderful company which included Nellie Farren, Fred Leslie, Edward Terry, Kate Vaughan and E. W. Royce.

George Elton first appeared on the stage at Shepherd's Bush as an amateur in a farcical comedy called *Glitter*. I was with him in that play. He made a name for himself on the professional stage, and has many successes to his credit in drama, comedy and musical comedy. He was in the original cast of *The Arcadians* as Father Time, and never missed a performance during the entire run of 809 performances. George Elton died in December, 1942.

Tread Softly, a comedy by Peter Traill, was produced by Val Gielgud at Daly's on November 7, 1935, with a cast including Ronald Squire, Edmond Breon, Eileen Peel, Jessie Winter, Fred Hearne, Robert Flemyng, Denis Cowles and Yvonne Arnaud.

As entertainment the piece was unequal, but there was a little good comedy and much good acting. Ronald Squire and Yvonne Arnaud won the praise of the critics.

When Yvonne was a little girl music seemed the best of all things to her. To play herself—in a childish way—or, better still, to hear other people playing, was her great joy. At school she made music on her lesson books all the time, and strummed on her desk when she should have been learning the histories and geographies of nations. But, she says, "I am not sorry. Music is still the best thing to me." At fifteen years of age Yvonne won the first prize at the Conservatoire

in Paris for pianoforte playing. Then, for five years, she travelled all over the world, playing at concerts in the big cities. She has played in America, Russia, Germany and Austria. A friend said to Yvonne: "Why not try to make some more money and go on the stage?"

She had heard of George Edwardes and was advised to go and see him. So, one day, hoping nothing, Yvonne said: "I go to him and ask that he sees me. By good fortune he is there and I talk to him. I can sing a little, and play and act—so I think. He was very, very kind, and gave me an engagement to play in *The Quaker Girl*."

In this musical play, she understudied the part of Princess Mathilde, played by Elsie Spain. When Elsie was on holiday, Yvonne played the part for three weeks. Her next venture was to see Michael Faraday, who was producing *The Girl in the Taxi* at the Lyric Theatre. He engaged her for the part of Suzanne. Yvonne made her name in a night. On the first night of *The Girl in the Taxi*, a messenger boy came with a small wicker basket, and in it was an all-black kitten. It was addressed: "Miss Yvonne Arnaud: for Luck." There was no name and Yvonne has never found out who sent it to her. Anyhow, it seems to have brought her luck.

Yvonne Arnaud has the unique distinction of being a great actress as well as a great pianist. She has broadcast and televised as both. Thousands have seen her in *And So to Bed*, *The Improper Duchess*, *By Candlelight*, *Canaries Sometimes Sing* (with Ronald Squire) and *Plan for a Hostess*.

St. Helena, a play by R. C. Sherriff and Jeanne de Casalis, was presented on March 19, 1936, with a cast of thirty-two, including Raymond Huntley, Frederick Peisley, Cecil Trouncer, Enid Lindsey and Kenneth Kent as Napoleon. Production was by Henry Cass.

Chinese White, a play by Dudley Hoys, was produced on August 7, 1936, the cast including Eva Moon, Harold Arnel, Ernest Monefiore, Frank Cochrane (remembered as the Cobbler in *Chu-Chin-Chow*), Edmund Willard, Valentine Dyall, and Arthur Hardy, who produced the piece. Arthur Hardy was one of the directors of the Opera House, Manchester, when it first opened as the New Queen's Theatre. In the same year, on November 10, a romance of Beethoven, by Arthur Watkyn, entitled *Muted Strings*, was presented. This play was previously produced at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, on October 5, 1936. It had a cast of twenty-five, including Dora Barton, Violet Vanbrugh, Isobel Elsom, A. Scott-Gatty, Kenneth Kent, Frances Waring, Jane Baxter, Allan Aynesworth, Richard Warner,

Robert Andrews, Amy Brandon-Thomas and Dorothy Leake. The producer was Henry Cass.

I am reminded of the fact that Violet Vanbrugh appeared at Daly's as a member of Augustin Daly's company in 1893, as Madame Lauretta in *Love in Tandem*. She also played at Daly's Lady Sneerwell in *The School for Scandal*, Alithea in *The Country Girl*—not the musical play—and Olivia in *Twelfth Night*. At one time Violet Vanbrugh understudied three great actresses—Mrs. Kendal, Ada Rehan and Ellen Terry—and it was her good fortune to appear for two of these players.

On April 29, 1937, we come to the last musical play production at Daly's prior to the closing down of the theatre. *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, which was a new version by G. P. Robinson, the musical adaptation being by Sydney Baynes.

It is a comic opera, originally written by Charles Lamb Kennedy (from the French), with music by Jacques Offenbach; it was first staged at Covent Garden Theatre on November 18, 1867. A new version by Charles Brookfield and Adrian Ross was produced at the Savoy Theatre on December 4, 1897.

The Daly's cast was: *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*—Enid Cruikshank; Wanda—Nancy Neale; Fritz—Bruce Carfax; Prince Paul—Richard Goolden; Baron Puck—Eddie Garr; Nepomuc—Peter Owen; General Boum—W. S. Percy; Baron Grog—Clifton Boyne; Sergeant-Major—Darroll Richards; Iza—Norah Colton; Olga—Hazel Jennings; Amelie—Molly Johnson; Charlotte—Marjorie Tomlin.

The Daly's version was produced by R. Claud Jenkins.

Offenbach, composer of so many delightful comic operas, was a martyr to illness during the last ten years of his life, and often worked best when suffering most. He usually spent his summer in the Pavilion of Henri IV. at St. Germain, which was the resort of many Parisian celebrities. There, in the middle of July, the poor invalid, wrapped in a fur dressing-gown, had to shut all the windows, as the least draught might have been fatal. Often, when his companions came home in the evening, they expected to find him dead, but instead heard him hard at work on the piano, and, indeed, only a few hours before his death, he was correcting the score of his last work, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* ("Tales of Hoffmann"). A German Jew, Offenbach went to Paris in his youth, and over a period of twenty-five years, wrote something like ninety operas, a truly remarkable output. He died on October 5, 1880, at the age of sixty-one.

And now we come to the last production of all at Daly's. It was

The First Legion, a play by Emmet Lavery. It ran for 102 performances, from July 28, 1937.

I give the cast and the characters in full : Rev. Chas. I. Keene, S.J.—Stanley Lathbury ; Rev. Paul Dugesne, S.J.—C. V. France ; Rev. Robert Fraser, S.J.—Norman MacOwan ; Dr. Peter Morell—Franklin Dyll ; Rev. Edward Quarterman, S.J.—Fewlass Llewellyn ; Rev. Mark Ahern, S.J.—Colin Keith-Johnston ; Rev. Thomas Rawleigh, S.J.—Kim Peacock ; Rev. John Fulton, S.J.—Raymond Huntley ; Rev. Jose-Maria Sierra, S.J.—Wilfrid Grantham ; Jimmy Magee—Leonard Thorne ; Rt. Rev. Monsignor Michael Carey—Ralph Roberts. Producer—Eugene Robert.

Ralph Roberts appeared in the original production of *The Merry Widow* as the comic waiter in the Maxim's Restaurant scene, and very funny he was, too. Ralph has had a varied career on the stage and screen, and has performed in all parts of the world. The first time I saw him was at the old Gaiety Theatre in Edmund Payne's part, Sammy Gigg, in *The Toreador*. At the time of writing, Ralph is appearing as Mr. Stanley in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* at the Savoy Theatre.

The final curtain at Daly's fell on September 25, 1937—"an inglorious end for a glorious institution, to give place to yet one more cinema," as J. Bannister Howard says in his book.

I am convinced that had the control of Daly's been left in Robert Evett's experienced hands, with my old friend, Cecil Paget, as general manager, Daly's Theatre would still be in existence and going strong, as the "Home of Musical Comedy." And, incidentally, the name ought to have been changed years ago to "Edwardes's Theatre."

The end was without glamour. There was no gala performance. Like an old "star" fallen on evil days, Daly's expired without an audience. I have no big scene with which to end this story, for nothing happened. The curtain fell for the last time, and that was all. With memories of the theatre's glorious past in my mind, I wrote the following letter to the Editor of the *Daily Mail*, in the hope that something would be done to mark the passing of Daly's :

"Those of us who were fortunate enough, as I was, to have been present at the final performance at the old Gaiety Theatre—before its demolition—on July 4, 1903, will, I feel sure, vote for a final Daly's night on similar lines. Daly's Theatre was for so many years recognised as the 'Home of Musical Comedy.' I would suggest a miscellaneous entertainment—to be broadcast—given by ex-members of Daly's musical play productions, and, if possible, an act from a Daly's musical play, such as the second act of *The Merry Widow*. The

performance, either a *matinée* or an evening performance, to be in aid of a theatrical charity. Anyhow, all old playgoers would, I am sure, welcome a celebration of the kind suggested by me. Happily, many of Daly's old favourites are still with us."

The letter was not published and nothing came of my suggestion.

But I was not alone in my sad memories. One who had as great a right as any to attend the last performance was there. On that—for me unforgettable—Saturday evening of September 25, 1937, Dame Marie Tempest sat in a box and said farewell to the stage she had made famous. There was another note of drama.

When the curtain fell on *The First Legion*, Cecil Paget, the manager, came on the stage and made a valedictory speech in a voice broken by emotion. He touched on the theatre's long history of successes, and when he mentioned Dame Marie Tempest's name at the head of the list of Daly's stars, the applause was terrific.

Dame Marie, in an interview, referred to how she was first engaged at Daly's. She had just returned from America, and made all arrangements to go back there. Contracts had been signed, casts engaged. "George Edwardes," she said, "made short work of me. He was determined to have me for Daly's; and he did not mind what it cost him." When the negotiations were over and her engagement was settled, she asked him what her part was to be. "Oh!" Mr. Edwardes said blandly, "it isn't written yet." It turned out to be Adèle in *An Artist's Model*.

The scene outside Daly's Theatre must have reminded Dame Marie Tempest of the days when her name on the theatre's facade seemed as permanent as the theatre itself. Just before her car drove off, the commissionaire put his head in at the door: "I must have a last handshake, Madame," he said, while the crowd drew nearer, peered in and whispered breathlessly. "I've been here thirty-five years. My name is Robinson." He extended an enormous hand in which Dame Marie's was quite lost. Then he shut the door and the car drove off amid wavings and cries of goodwill. I am indebted to W. A. Darlington's account of the final performance at Daly's as published in the *Daily Telegraph* for this information.

Daly's Theatre, which was famous all over the world for its musical play productions, was bought by Warner Brothers. Purchase and rebuilding, I understand, cost about £250,000.

EPILOGUE TO A MEMORY

by *W. Macqueen-Pope*

DALY'S Theatre is now only a memory. Mr. D. Forbes-Winslow has enshrined it so completely in this book that there is little for me to add. Except, perhaps, memories of the days through which it lived. And memories today, for those of us who are middle aged and of the Daly's period, are by far the best things in life. For memories are eternal youth. We shall never see those days again, nor anything like them. Some people think that this is a good thing, and consider that we have progressed. Have we? I wonder.

The days of Daly's were those when a golden sovereign was our standard, and that golden sovereign was worth twenty shillings in the pound. What a handsome, rich looking coin it was, and what endless possibilities it held. How much more satisfying and solid than the paper money of to-day. The contrast between that golden disc and the strip of paper which now passes for it is the finest comparison possible between the days of Daly's and those of to-day.

For the days of Daly's were the last period of the Victorian times and the whole of the Edwardian times, when this country reached a pitch of peace, power and prosperity it has never known since. Days of security, too. Good, leisurely days, when we had time to think, time to talk, time to let beauty play a part in our lives. But the tempo was already quickening. The motor was displacing the victoria, the landau, the brougham. Multiple horse power was edging out the perfectly matched pair of high-steppers. The telephone was coming into our lives, but as yet mostly on the business side. Women clerks were still something of a novelty. Femininity held sway. Women moved with a swish of silk; men wore top hats and frock coats and dignity was not at a discount.

Every man who wanted to be what we called "in the swim" carried a walking stick and wore gloves. He would have perished rather than smoke a pipe in the West End streets. The River Thames was our playground; we had not learnt the dubious delight of dashing two hundred miles to dance and drink cocktails at a road house—and the cocktail we knew was a gin and bitters. Food was a matter of importance, something to be eaten with due reverence for the cooking; a couple who left their table between the courses, at one

of the few restaurants which had a band, in order to dance to it, would have been expelled by a scandalised *maître d'hôtel*. Living was cheap—for the sovereign really contained twenty shillings. What you could buy with it would have amazed the young people of to-day.

London was an English city, it had not become cosmopolitan in speech, manner, dress and appearance. The hansom cab was with us, the growler plied and we had the horse bus still. Hayden Coffin, Daly's *jeune premier par excellence*, drove tandem down to the theatre in a dog cart behind a perfect pair of cobs. The West End was a very definite locality and had a stamp which has vanished to-day. Leicester Square, on the corner of which Daly's Theatre stood, was the very centre of nightlife and the pleasure ground of London.

In the last war we sang "Farewell, Leicester Square." Little did we realise that we were prophets. For the Leicester Square we Daly-goers knew is no more. Up to a few years ago it was still the first place visitors to London enquired for. To-day, of the thousands of American soldiers who have asked me questions as I go about the West End, not one has wanted Leicester Square. It is Piccadilly they are after. From a glittering centre of playhouses, restaurants, music halls, bohemian cafes and public houses, it has become quiet and sedate, a place for cinemas, milk bars and great public institutions. No more shall we see the Empire, the Cafe de l'Europe (although the name remains), the Leicester Lounge, The Alhambra, the Provence, the Cavour, Sir Joshua Reynolds' lovely house—some of them were destroyed by enemy action, but mostly they surrendered to the changing conditions. Shadows bellow with mechanical voices where once the human form and lovely singing held us enthralled. We sip tea where once we paid threepence for a Scotch and got a splash of soda for nothing. The lights were still there until this war shut them down, but they were mechanical and commercial. We did not, in Daly's days, need so much artificial light, we made our own nights gay.

Perhaps it is a more respectable, and more sober place to-day. Indeed I know it is. Time was—the very time with which we deal—when no lady could have walked across Leicester Square unescorted or alone, for fear of being accosted. But most women, in those days, wore no make-up, with the exception of a little powder (surreptitiously applied) and between the monde and the demi-monde there was a great gulf fixed—in manners and in appearance. What a sensation if a lady had lit a cigarette in the stalls of Daly's, in the great days. Yet, at the end, it was the rule, not the exception. Just one of those little things which go to show.

Yet cigarettes were cheap. You got twenty for sixpence of the brands we call, collectively, gaspers. They now cost nearly five times as much. That also goes to show how the times have changed. On a programme of *San Toy* which lies before me, there is an advertisement which shows a group of five men, all wearing frock coats, tall hats and very tall collars, and, of course, buttonholes—this is what it says :—

“ Five Mashers who live in the West
Cigarettes were determined to test
Large numbers they bought
And tried every sort
But found Pick Me Up were the best.”

Where are the Mashers to-day? They became the Knuts, now I suppose they are the “ lads ”—but they don’t wear the same clothes and they don’t smoke Pick Me Up cigarettes, which I see by the advertisement could be obtained at the theatre bars price 3d. for twelve and 8d. for twenty-five. Even cheaper than the gaspers. These cigarettes took their name from a popular periodical of those days—which was considered rather naughty. To-day it would not raise a blush or an eyebrow. The advertisement also says “ A consignment of these cigarettes is made weekly, and free, by the manufacturers for our troops in South Africa.”

Which brings me to war, a subject we are unpleasantly familiar with to-day. In the days of Daly’s, war had no place in our lives and a very small place in our thoughts. Wars were remote affairs conducted by professional soldiers. We always won, because these were the days when we were quite sure that one Englishman was worth three foreigners. We had a Navy, a fighting Navy, and we sang about it. You couldn’t beat the boys of the bulldog breed, and the “ heroes ” of Daly’s shows were very frequently naval officers. As for the Soldiers of the Queen, well, we pointed to them proudly as the men who always won. Perhaps we were a bit shaken by the Boer War—perhaps the word “ Reverse ” appeared in the newspapers too often to suit us, but we sent out “ Bobs ” and Kitchener—and the soldiers of the Queen did it again. London went mad when a tiny town was relieved. It had been defended by a man who wore a curious hat—so familiar to-day on the heads of our youths—and Baden-Powell (whose name presented difficulties in pronunciation and who was usually referred to as Barden-Powall, when he wasn’t called B.P.) was a national hero.

But it was all a long way off. The lights were full up, London carried on, wore khaki and red ties (khaki was a novelty, too), red,

white and blue waistcoats and a little round medallion portrait of its favourite general in its buttonhole. A white whiskered gentleman referred to as "old Kroojer" was the villain of the piece. And the "handy men" went up with their monster guns (4.7's they were) and made it hot for him.

And one of the very pivots of these days was Daly's Theatre. It was a microcosm of London life and of light entertainment. It was the home of a special brand of musical comedy, invented by its Master—the great George Edwardes. He himself was the very epitome of the times, in appearance and manners. On the bills and programmes it said, "Under the Sole Control and Management of Mr. George Edwardes"—and so it was. Not for nothing was he called "The Guv'nor." He was a giant of the Theatre—the great managers of to-day are pigmies to him—and Daly's was one of his principal stamping grounds. He it was, as Mr. Winslow tells us, who took over from Augustin Daly, the American, and made Daly's Theatre a paying proposition. More, he made it a definite part of London life—and also of the Theatre life of the whole country. For his touring companies, composed of stars of the provinces, packed the houses everywhere. And many of his Daly's stars came from them. Some preferred to remain provincial stars rather than face the fickle London footlights. And often the provincial public preferred them to the stars of the West End. Edwardes knew his public when he said it never made a mistake.

A performance at Daly's was a cross section of the era. Here was taste, here was artistry, here was the best of everything. And in Victorian and Edwardian days the best only was good enough. Quality mattered more than quantity. Here, under the selective power of the Guv'nor, were the best artists, the best composers, the best scenery, the best clothes, the prettiest girls, that could be found. It was different from the Gaiety—a different atmosphere, a different type of show—but these two places were the best of their kind that London, or any other great city, including New York, has ever seen. There was an atmosphere about Daly's, different from the atmosphere of the Gaiety. It is difficult to describe it. If one gave the best velvet, the other gave the best silk—both magnificent materials but different in texture.

If the best was demanded back stage, the best also was found in the front of the house. The audiences were as smart and as distinguished as the shows. An Edwardes First Night was a social function such as you could not see to-day. Big film premieres may be packed with celebrities but have they really come to see the picture,

or are they lured by the enticement of a pet charity, the press photographers and the gossip of publicity? A Daly's audience went because it wanted to, because it was part of the fashionable life, because you just had to have seen the latest Daly's play or you were not in touch. It had, too, a close and friendly feeling for the performers, although in those days they did not run about in Society as they do now. The glamour of distance still surrounded them. People turned round and looked at them in the streets—there was still a mystery about an actor or actress. The stalls were a living edition of Debreit. White waistcoats gleamed, women's jewels shone and glittered—both sexes were perfectly "turned out." The pit and the gallery had not forgotten how to applaud. The upper circle—that strange class-conscious part of the house—was packed with Suburbia. The dress circle held rich people and those who could not get into the stalls. And nobody, unless in full evening dress, could get into the stalls or circle anyway. A visit to the Theatre, the aristocrat of the entertainment world, was an event to be looked forward to and talked about afterwards. How much more interest was shown, how the play was discussed at dinner parties, how the music was played and sung at musical evenings and at-homes, derided now as means of entertainment, but not so bad, believe me. For music was less transient. A good tune, and a good song, lived on. It was not torn to death by the radio in the course of a few weeks. And the music which came from Daly's lives on to-day—and always will.

You would see the "Guv'nor" on a first night, sitting in his box, watching, not the stage—he knew all about that—but the effect on the audience. The audience was *his* "Guv'nor" and he knew it. And he had an uncanny knack of knowing what his "Guv'nor" wanted too. Plays like *A Country Girl*, redolent of England, or like *The Merry Widow*, redolent of Vienna—he knew exactly. If sometimes he slipped at the beginning, it was all right in the long run. People went again and again. They waited hours for the pit and gallery. They cheered, they laughed, they applauded, more than they do to-day.

And there were characters in the cast—for Daly's had for years almost a stock company. Men like Freddie Kaye and Lennox Pawle, who would stop all night in the dressing room playing cards, and who once came to the conclusion that the parts they played in a certain show were unworthy of them, and walked out after the first act; a young man who specialised in old men parts, and would go down to Ogbourne to gallop the "Guv'nor's" horses after he had missed a show to go to a race meeting—the "Guv'nor" understood and forgave

them all. And that young man afterwards won the Derby and his name is Tom Walls. He graduated at Daly's.

Daly's would provide a topical song which always took the town. Those who heard Rutland Barrington sing "Peace, Peace"—with its verses as up-to-date as the evening papers (and in those days London had eight or nine evening papers) will always remember it. W. H. Berry, still happily with us, was another Daly's recruit who was a master of this now departed art. News lasted longer then, topics were not so soon forgotten or exhausted, we had no nine o'clock news and Joseph McLeod reading it. The banner headline was not yet invented, stories ran into columns of small print, and were closely read. And the notice of a new play at Daly's would occupy a column, too. The critics of the dailies had the week end to think it over and prepare it, for Saturday nights were Daly's first nights, and the Sunday papers waited a week before they gave it their real eulogy. Another sign of the times was that daily papers in most cases cost a half-penny too.

The foyer of the theatre was as distinctive as the show. Its rich panelling, its bronzes, its Japanese armour, its few steps up, its quiet lighting—all spoke of richness and leisure. Its handsome auditorium was a place in which to enjoy the best things in suitable surroundings. It looked, it felt like, and it was—a Theatre. Its stage door was pure romance. Once, too, it was pure tragedy. For in its later days, into the hands of the stage-door keeper, James White confided a parcel. He warned the man it was to be locked up and given to nobody but him. And he added that when he asked for it, the man was to be sure to ask him if he really wanted it. The day came when he did ask for it and expressed the certainty of his desire. And the next morning, the world read of his death. That parcel contained the means to his end.

Well, Daly's has gone now, but Mr. Forbes-Winslow has done us gallant service by immortalising it in print. Its day was over. It belonged to a time which has passed. It began as a dramatic house. It ended as one. It had seen only 44 years . . . but what years they were.

It belonged to the days of the Old Queen, who had already become almost a legend to her loving subjects, but who, four years after the Theatre was built, came out of her retirement to show herself to millions of her people, a little figure in black, sitting in her carriage, driving through her London on a fine summer's day, to return thanks at St. Paul's, for sixty years of sovereignty. And before and after her went men from every part of the earth, all subjects of hers. It

was the greatest show this country has ever seen, or ever will see. It could never happen again—the time has gone by. But we who saw it remember the bands, the scarlet and gold, the soldiers of all colours, that tiny, bowing figure, and the cheering emotional crowds getting what was for many the only glimpse they ever had of their Queen, who had lived and reigned so long that she seemed immortal.

Daly's saw her passing, and a nation in mourning, stunned by what seemed impossible. That day an era passed away, as well as a Queen. It saw the accession of her son, Edward the Peacemaker, a regular patron of Daly's. It was the coming of the motor, the taxi, the aeroplane, and the motorbus. It saw the days of the London season, of the Drawing Rooms, of debutants in Court Dress, whose carriages crept down the Mall whilst sightseers made audible comments. It saw the lavish richness of the Edwardian days as compared with the more restrained wealth of Victorian days, the days of a 6d. income tax. It saw a gayer spirit arise, a less conventional era succeed as King succeeded Queen. Yet it was still difficult to say K.C. instead of Q.C. when speaking of counsel, and there was still V.R. on the pillar boxes. How odd the postage stamps looked, and how we snapped up the new coins. But Daly's was still Daly's. It saw son succeed father and it saw the Great War come. It saw a partial blackout and Zeppelins fly overhead. But still it was Daly's, and that war produced its longest run. The Guv'nor himself had passed on, but he had men who had worked under him to succeed him and Daly's remained Daly's.

It passed into the hands of "big business" but still it retained its own personality. "Big Business" failed and died. And the times were altering. Speed was upon us, the master hands were no more. Restlessness was the spirit of the age. The movies were gathering power. Respectability and commerce were closing in. The great musical shows wanted a bigger theatre—Daly's went back to comedies.

The last time I was connected with it was when I was in charge for my friend Sir Seymour Hicks. He did a play—and a successful one—called *Vintage Wine*, and for a while, the spirit of Daly's flickered up. Sir Seymour knew all about it.

And what was Daly's but a bottle of vintage wine—a marvellous vintage of which nothing now remains—the vintage of George Edwardes. It has passed away. Shakespeare, who provided its opening play, still stands in Leicester Square, watching the crowds pass by. Although he has lost a hand by enemy action, he is for all time, so what does he care? But Daly's was not for all time—it was for a time when London was London, when there was a London

Season and the houses of the West End had window boxes which made the city into a garden, when Eton and Harrow at Lords' was a landmark, when the Boat Race divided the country for months into two hostile camps, of Ascot Sunday and Boulter's Lock, and when the Cattle Show was the big week for theatres ; when there really were twenty shillings in the pound.

Great days, golden days, now only a memory—but in that memory Daly's Theatre will live as one of the most golden of them all.

INDEX.

- Audran, E., 189.
 Argyll and Hamilton, Duchess or, 13.
 Arnaud, Yvonne, 198, 199.
 Arneil, Harold, 199.
 Aynesworth, Allan, 199.
 Andrews, Robert, 200.
 Alder, Karen Stanley, 196.
 Astaire, Fred, 196.
 Allgood, Sara, 196.
 Alyn, Glen, 197.
 Ackroyd, Carlito, 179.
 Amner, Walter, 191.
 Albani, Madame, 85.
 Adams, Sam, 170.
 Afalo, F. G., 36.
 Alexander, Sir George, 34, 99, 102, 103, 157.
 Astor, Adelaide, 39.
 Anstey, Mr., 72.
 Andrews, Talleur, 155.
 Andrews, Maidie, 42.
 Atkinson, Frank, 156.
 Askey, Arthur, 148.
 Anderson, Arthur, 114.
 Abud, C. J., 124, 125.
 Aylwyn, Jean, 129.
 Anderson, H. W., 49, 123.
 Aldin, Arthur, 49, 123.
 Asche, Oscar, 50, 143, 149, 185.
 Augarde, Adrienne, 72, 195.
 Augarde, Amy, 72.
 Anderson, Percy, 67.

 Bouchier, Arthur, 25, 26, 32, 102.
 Bancroft, Sir Squire, 15.
 Blackman, F. J., 50, 71, 123, 156, 164.
 Bancroft, Lady, 15, 27.
 (Marie Wilton).
 Beere, Mrs. Bernard, 15, 27.
 Bernhardt, Sarah, 30, 31, 116, 124.
 Burgess, Kathleen, 188.
 Bentley, Frederick, 194.
 Bird, Walter, 194, 195.
 Bright Bros., John, 171.
 Bryan, Hal, 195.
 Blinn, Holbrook, 195.
 Bonaparte, Napoleon, 195.
 Brunton, Dorothy, 183.
 Beecham, Sir Thomas, 186.
 Blamey, Frederick, 179.
 Bartsch, Dr. R. H., 179.
 Berte, Heinrich, 179.
 Bryer, Vera, 180.
 Blake, Paul, 197.

 Burne, Nancy, 196.
 Bach, Reginald, 197.
 Bernard, Kevan, 196.
 Bland, Joyce, 197.
 Braddell, Maurice, 196.
 Brieux, Eugene, 196.
 Boyne, Clifton, 200.
 Bond, Godfrey, 197.
 Brandon-Thomas, Amy, 198, 200.
 Berendt, Rachel, 198.
 Breon, Edmund, 198.
 Beethoven, 199.
 Barton, Dora, 199.
 Baxter, Jane, 199.
 Baynes, Sydney, 200.
 Boor, Frank, 63.
 Butt, Clara, 154.
 Barrington, Rutland, 63, 64, 65, 67, 69, 71, 158, 192.
 Beringer, Vera, 72.
 Barrie, Sir James, 57, 148, 169.
 Bantock, Sir Granville, 36.
 Butt, Sir Alfred, 44, 48, 49, 135, 161.
 Bonita, 129.
 Barrett, Chas., 183.
 Biggs, E. J., 123.
 Baring, Patrick, 196.
 Behn, Aphra, 125.
 Byatt, W. J., 116.
 Bantock, Leedham, 118.
 Butterworth, Clara, 118, 119, 147.
 Boucicault, Dion, 103.
 Burrell, Daisy, 119.
 Bodanzky, R., 104.
 Boote, Rosie, 109.
 (Marchioness of Headfort).
 Bath, Hubert, 143, 148.
 Barclay, Frank, 147.
 Benson, Sir F. R., 149.
 Brayton, Lily, 149.
 Brady, Veronica, 151.
 Beatty, May, 151.
 Blakeley, James, 138, 155.
 Blakeley, William, 33.
 Bates, Thorpe, 140, 143, 144, 146.
 Barker, E., 74.
 Butler, Walter, 156.
 Brisson, Carl, 159, 165, 172.
 Brogden, Arthur, 109.
 Brogden, Gwendoline, 161.
 Bell, Maisie, 164, 183.
 Bacon, Mai, 165, 185.
 Blanche, Ada, 170.
 Blatchford, Robert, 170.
 Brookfield, Charles, 152, 200.
 Bedford, Duke of, 173.

- Beecham, Sir Joseph, 173.
 Barnes, Winifred, 42, 118, 119, 120.
 Buchanan-Taylor, W., 88.
 Beerbohm, Evelyn, 89.
 Barry, Norah, 79, 111.
 Brune, Adrienne, 79.
 Brahms, 87.
 Berry, W. H., 74, 75, 76, 77, 89, 95, 97, 104, 105, 111, 114, 118, 119, 129, 163, 179.
 Burnaby, Davy, 148.
 Brangwyn, R. A., Frank, 128.
 Braham, Leonora, 33.
 Bradfield, Louis, 43, 55, 62, 63, 71, 72, 73, 74, 91.

 Carte, Mrs. D'Oyly, 124.
 Carte, Richard D'Oyly, 35, 42, 73, 124, 125.
 Carte, Rupert D'Oyly, 124.
 Cranbourne, Viscount, 12.
 Carmarthen, Marquis of, 12.
 Craig, John, 28.
 Clarke, George, 25, 26, 28.
 Cochrane, Frank, 199.
 Coward, J. M., 31.
 Cowles, Dennis, 198.
 Clavering, Mr., 13.
 Cass, Henry, 199, 200.
 Carlisle, Sybil, 28.
 Carton, Pauline, 198.
 Chamberlain, Cyril, 198.
 Cruikshank, Enid, 200.
 Carfax, Bruce, 200.
 Colton, Norah, 200.
 Curzon, George, 197.
 Curzon, Frank, 99, 134, 153, 182.
 Crowe, C. Carlton, 196.
 Comber, Bobbie, 196.
 Cole, Joan, 185.
 Coleman, Lisa, 183.
 Crawford, Mimi, 185, 186.
 (Countess of Suffolk).
 Cautley, Charles, 185.
 Coxon, Eric, 185.
 Clapham, Rutland, 185.
 Cooper, Melville, 187.
 Carter, Desmond, 187, 196.
 Cavanagh, Paul, 180.
 Charig, Philip, 180.
 Carr, Osmond, Dr., 192.
 Colin, Jean, 194.
 Clarkson, Joan, 196.
 Cellier, Frank, 195.
 Chadwick, W. Spencer, 17.
 Code, Violet, 189.
 Clayton, Herbert, 155, 195.
 Collingbourne, Florence, 68.
 Clift, Denison, 197.
 Cibber, Colley, 102.
 Collier, Beatrice, 96, 98.

 Cridland, Howard, 86, 92.
 Cooper, Gladys, 42, 89.
 Craven, Hawes, 74.
 Coyne, Joseph, 77, 78, 79, 82, 89, 90, 138, 139, 165.
 Coffin, Hayden, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 55, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 72, 125, 127, 138, 147, 183, 188, 194.
 Coffin, C. R., 37.
 Champion, Victor, 42.
 Cleather, Gordon, 77.
 Cellier, Alfred, 42, 125, 126.
 Cellier, Francois, 42.
 Collins, Josie, 49, 140, 144, 145, 146, 148, 149, 151, 154.
 Collins, Winnie, 156.
 Cochran, C. B., 156, 161, 178, 179.
 Colne, Noel, 164.
 Coyle, John E., 167.
 Clutsam, G. H., 147, 148, 149, 179.
 Cave, Herbert, 147.
 Calthorp, Dion Clayton, 148.
 Calthorp, Donald, 119.
 Caumont, Mdlle., 138.
 Claire, Ina, 138.
 Coward, Noel, 141, 156, 178, 179.
 Croom-Johnson, Mr. Justice, 144.
 Coleman, Charles, 111.
 Callish, Betty, 112.
 Clarkson, Willie, 117.
 Craven, Elise, 114, 118, 119, 186.
 Crocker, Gordon, 115.
 Cory, Pop, 118, 154.
 Carr, Cameron, 119.
 Chapman, Mrs., 123.
 Cook-Furieux, 125.
 Coveney, Harriet, 125.
 Churston, Lady, 133.
 Cholmondely, Lady George, 133.
 Caryll, Ivan, 45, 69, 127, 128, 192, 195.
 Cutler, Kate, 45, 65, 129.
 Cannon, Charles, 48, 123.
 Carrington, Mrs., 49.
 Courtly, T. J., 49, 116.
 Courtneidge, Robert, 50, 147, 157, 160, 169, 183, 188, 189.
 Coop, Colin, 67.
 Clether, Brenda, 194.

 D'Orme, Aileen, 69.
 Duval, G., 72.
 D'Orme, Alice, 72.
 Diosy, Arthur, 55.
 Doughty, Cyril, 119.
 Dunn, James, 121, 122.
 Dawes, W. H., 123.
 Davies, Ben, 125.
 Deslys, Gaby, 129.

- Dare, Zena, 158.
 Dare, Phyllis, 129, 138, 142, 156,
 157, 158, 183.
 Dark, Sidney, 132.
 Dudley, Countess of, 133.
 Dearth, Harry, 104, 106, 114, 147.
 Davies, Geoffrey, 185.
 Dudley, Earl of, 108.
 Douglas, E. A., 114.
 Dombey, Dolly, 118.
 Delorme, Isobel, 119.
 Derby, Lord, 135.
 De Manby, Alfred, 138.
 De Frece, Lauri, 104, 140, 141,
 144, 146.
 De Frece, Sir Walter, 147.
 Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan, 148.
 Dumas, A., 32, 154.
 Davies, Lilian, 167.
 Duke, Vernon, 168.
 Darewski, Herman, 169.
 Dango, Fanny, 39.
 Dunbar, Dorothy, 74.
 Drever, Constance, 79, 110.
 Dance, Sir George, 116, 150.
 Davidson, Vernon, 86, 118.
 Dewar, Doris, 86.
 Duncan, Mabel, 86.
 Dorgere, Arlette, 86.
 Dodson, A. E., 88, 129.
 Davison, Percy, 91.
 Du Maurier, Sir Gerald, 93.
 De Sousa, May, 96, 97, 129.
 Digney, Arthur, 194.
 Dean, Jenny, 195.
 Dene, Evelyn, 179.
 Day, Edith, 195.
 Douste, Jeanne, 31.
 Davenport, Bromley, 196.
 Denis, John, 194.
 Desmond, Florence, 190.
 Dixon-Conway, 183, 194.
 Daly, Mark, 185.
 Dale, Gus, 185.
 Deans, Harris, 177, 187.
 Dickson, Dorothy, 177.
 Doble, Frances, 178.
 Davies, Novello, Madame, 179.
 Dolman, Richard, 180.
 De Bray, Henry, 197.
 Dukes, Ashley, 196.
 Damer, Margaret, 198.
 Dickens, Dorothy, 196.
 Dodds, Edwin, 196.
 Darlington, W. A., 202.
 Dyall, Franklin, 201.
 Dyall, Valentine, 199.
 Daly, Augustin, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17,
 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25,
 27, 28, 29, 200.
 De Casalis, Jeanne, 199.
 Delubac, Jacqueline, 198.
 Dainton, Noel, 198.
 Drew, John, 22.
 Duse, Eleanora, 30, 31.
 D'Arcy, Edward, 154, 165.
 Edwardes, George, 14, 15, 16, 30,
 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40,
 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49,
 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, 58, 59, 62,
 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71,
 73, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82,
 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92,
 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101,
 102, 104, 109, 112, 113, 114,
 117, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124,
 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130,
 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136,
 138, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144,
 145, 147, 152, 158, 163, 170,
 174, 181, 185, 189, 191, 193,
 195, 199, 202.
 Edwardes, Major, 134.
 Emney, Fred, 74, 158.
 Erskine, M., 74.
 Erskine, Margot, 96.
 Eldee, Lilian, 69.
 Evelyn, Clara, 79, 85, 91, 158.
 Elliott, Madge, 79.
 Elgar, Sir Edward, 104.
 Ediss, Connie, 109, 128.
 Evans, Amy, 111, 112.
 Evans, Will, 129, 188.
 Edwardes, D'Arcy, 123.
 Ephraim, Lee, 135, 177.
 Edwardes, Nora, 123.
 Edwardes, Mrs. George, 49, 123,
 144.
 England, Brian, 50, 57.
 England, Paul, 165.
 Ellison, Sydney, 128.
 Elsom, Isobel, 129, 199.
 Edouin, Willie, 45, 72, 73, 188,
 189, 194.
 Elsie, Lily, 49, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82,
 83, 84, 89, 95, 97, 111, 129,
 139, 190.
 Edwards, Minor, Geo., 49.
 Edward, VII., 53, 78, 117, 128.
 Evett, Robert, 72, 73, 74, 77, 111,
 138, 139, 143, 144, 150, 158,
 173, 176, 201.
 Elton, George, 198.
 Elton, William, 198.
 Ellis, Vivian, 187.
 Ervine, St. John, 61.
 Ellinger, Desiree, 185.
 Edwards, Felix, 190.
 Elba, Marie, 33.
 Findon, B. W., 69.
 Felix, H., 74, 75.
 Frankau, Ronald, 56, 114.

- Frankau, Gilbert, 56.
 Field, Mrs., 42, 44.
 Furber, Douglas, 148.
 Flemming, Claude, 148.
 Fraser, Jessie, 148.
 Farren, Fred, 149.
 Fields, Gracie, 137, 142.
 Faraday, P. M., 165, 199.
 Fields, Hubert, 177.
 Flopp, Lydia, 39.
 Ford, Ernest, 42, 148.
 Flecker, Ernest, 42.
 Farren, Nellie, 33, 39, 65, 91,
 125, 126, 198.
 Farkoa, Maurice, 33.
 Fraser, Harold, 180.
 Fall, Leo, 86, 88, 111, 158, 164,
 165.
 Foster, B. S., 89.
 Firth, Elizabeth, 74.
 Fraser, Alec., 96, 111, 167, 190.
 Frohman, Charles, 21, 99.
 Frederick, The Great, 192.
 Francis, Molly, 194.
 Fraser, Nancy, 195.
 Field, Dorothy, 180.
 Forde, Sylvia, 183.
 Fielding, Tom, 183.
 Filippi, Rosina, 104, 140.
 Fayne, Greta, 183.
 Fenstone and Collins, 185.
 French, Betty, 185.
 Formby, Junr., George, 135.
 Frank, Julian, 185.
 Fagan, Gemma, 196.
 France, C. V., 201.
 Fergusson, Donald, 156.
 Flemmying, Robert, 198.
 Fodor, Ladislaus, 198.
 Fleming, Atholl, 198.
 Farren, William, 28.
 Forbes-Robertson, Sir J., 31, 32.
 Fuseli, 13.
 Fraser-Simson, H., 143, 144, 145,
 148.

 Greenbank, Percy, 72, 168.
 Green, Mabel, 72.
 Greene, Evie, 36, 69, 74, 75, 112,
 195.
 Gunn, Michael, 42, 124.
 Gunn, Agnes, 72.
 Graves, George, 49, 73, 77, 78,
 80, 83, 84, 139, 145, 159, 168,
 169, 170, 188.
 Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Mr., 60.
 Grossmith, Senr., Geo., 65, 148,
 181.
 Grossmith, Junr., Geo., 109, 111,
 127, 128, 129, 136, 142, 159,
 180, 181, 182.
 Grattan, Harry, 68, 128.

 Goffin, Cora, 191.
 Greenbank, Harry, 56, 63.
 Garrick, David, 24, 29, 59.
 Gregory, George, 44.
 Gavin, S. J., Father, 123.
 Grey, Sylvia, 125.
 Glenville, Shaun, 129, 190.
 Gay, Maisie, 129, 177.
 Grebe, Jacques, 129.
 Gwynne, Julia, 134.
 German, Sir Edward, 108.
 Grey, Mary, 111.
 Greene, Norman, 112.
 Graham, Harry, 143, 145, 148.
 George, Mabelle, 168.
 Gawthorne, Peter, 154.
 Gilbert, Jean, 156, 157, 167, 168.
 Gilbert, Sir W. S., 64, 65, 107,
 177, 181, 184.
 Gilbert, R. A., Sir Alfred, 17.
 Gardner, Shayle, 167.
 Green, Mabel, 42.
 George, V., 33, 34, 60, 83, 95,
 116, 145, 182, 186.
 Glyn, Gertrude, 79, 96.
 Gilliland, Helen, 79, 180.
 Greenbaum, F., 86.
 Golden, Richard, 86, 87.
 Gordon, Kitty, 86.
 Goolden, Richard, 87, 200.
 Guy, Gladys, 96, 97, 112.
 Gregory, Frank, 197.
 Gilbert, Robert, 198.
 Gordon, William, 198.
 Gielgud, Val, 198.
 Grantham, Wilfred, 201.
 Garr, Eddie, 200.
 Gee, George, 196.
 Gillette, Roland, 197.
 Grimm, 31.
 Gibson, John, 197.
 Godwin, Mary, 197.
 Grossmith, Lawrence, 197.
 Gay, Noel, 196.
 Greene, Mina, 179.
 Gerrard, Gene, 187.
 Gordon, Oliver, 196.
 Grect, Sir Philip Ben, 188.
 Glover, Jimmy, 188.
 Grimaldi, 191.
 Gamble, Ellis, 12.
 Gilbert, Mrs., 18.
 Green, Mrs., 13.
 Gwynne, Nell, 23.
 Guitry, S., 31, 32, 136, 198.
 Goethe, 180.

 Hale, Robert, 129.
 Hale, Binnie, 129, 161.
 Hale, Sonnie, 129.
 Hearn, Lew, 129.
 Hood, Marion, 125, 126.

- Hollingshead, John, 26, 27, 125, 127.
Hollins, Redfern, 125.
Hannen, Nicholas, 105.
Houghton, Stanley, 107.
Horne, Lady (Allan), 115.
Hare, Sir John, 136.
Henson, Leslie, 148.
Haines, Alfred, 153.
Haines, Herbert, 153.
Hollman, J., 154.
Hammond, Percy, 161.
Hallatt, Henry, 167, 168.
Hoey, Dennis, 91, 168.
Hoffe, G. Monckton, 169.
Hall, Owen, 33, 39, 55, 56, 63, 65, 66.
Hylton, Millie, 39.
Hornsey, Leonard, 42, 188.
Hollender, Victor, 85.
Hanson, Kitty, 75, 96.
Harker, Joseph, 67, 72, 74, 90, 94, 95, 104, 149, 164.
Harker, Gordon, 94.
Hobson, May, 96.
Headfort, Marchioness of, 133.
Hill, Billie, 169, 172.
Hawtreys, Sir Charles, 102.
Hicks, Sir Seymour, 50, 126, 139, 151, 152, 153, 154, 157, 169, 181, 196.
Hood, Basil, 74, 86, 95, 104, 107, 111, 147.
Homfrey, Gladys, 63, 64, 96.
Hope, Maidie, 67.
Hatton, Alice, 72.
Hood, Tom, 192.
Hilliard, Henry, 194.
Hurgon, Austen, 194.
Hamilton, Henry, 72, 195.
Hamilton, Leslie, 190.
Howard, J. Bannister, 188, 190, 201.
Hubbard, Lorna, 188, 189, 191.
Hignell, Rose, 179, 188.
Harvey, Morris, 191.
Heming, Percy, 179.
Hart, Flora, 185.
Holloway, W. E., 196.
Haley, Averil, 196.
Hyde, Kenneth, 196.
Hancock, Reginald, 197.
Haddon, Peter, 197.
Hilburn, Peggy, 197.
Huntley, Raymond, 199, 201.
Huntley, G. P., 114, 115, 119, 134, 136, 140, 194.
Hoys, Dudley, 199.
Hardy, Arthur, 199.
Hasbord, Carl, 198.
Horrocks, Crewdson, 173.
Hearne, Fred, 198.
Harris, Sir Augustus, 15.
Highley, Reginald, 50.
Hogarth, 12.
Howell, 11.
Humperdinck, 31.
Irving, Sir Henry, 25, 29, 59, 94, 127, 153.
Irving, Ethel, 68, 69.
Irving, Daisie, 42, 77, 79, 97, 98.
Innes-Ker, Lord, 146.
Ide, George, 183, 185.
"Jenny," 115, 116.
"Jack the Ripper," 117.
Jacobi, Victor, 114, 151.
Johns, Barter, 42.
Jay, Dorothy, 147.
Jay, Isabel, 72, 194.
Janotha, Miss, 31.
Jones, Sidney, 33, 35, 45, 56, 57, 63, 64, 67, 138, 139, 142, 153, 188.
Jones, Guy, 153.
James, David, 125.
Johnson, Molly, 200.
Jennings, Hazel, 200.
Jenkins, R. Claud, 200.
Jordan, Mrs., 27.
James, Gerald, 50.
June, 80.
Kendal, Dame Madge, 140, 200.
Kendal, W. H., 140.
Kirby, Elizabeth, 63.
Keys, Nelson, 44, 134.
Kean, Edmund, 59.
Kenmare, Lord, 83.
Kaye, Fred, 36, 67, 69, 71, 74, 77, 96, 104.
Kove, Kenneth, 148.
Kelham, Avise, 114, 119.
Kent, Kenneth, 199.
Kent, Gerald, 197.
Kennedy, Chas. Lamb, 200.
King, Fred, 48.
Keith-Johnston, C., 201.
Keene, Malcolm, 196, 198.
King, Ada, 178.
Katzin, Olga, 197.
Kelly, John, 179.
Klit-Gaarde, M., 183.
Kilmorey, Lord, 124.
Kimberley, Harold, 194.
Kaiser, H. J., 16.
Knight, A. Charles, 58.
Kelly, Eva, 140.
Kerker, Gustave, 190.

Le Grand, Phyllis, 42, 77, 79, 87, 118.
 Le Grand, Veda, 118.
 Lonsdale, Frederick, 119, 143, 144, 145, 153, 156, 157, 164, 167, 180, 182.
 Lowne, C. M., 119.
 Lester, Mark, 140, 144, 149, 168, 172, 194.
 Lauder, Sir Harry, 146.
 Lonnen, E. J., 148.
 Lonnen, Jessie, 148.
 Leyland, Noel, 151.
 Large, Phyllis, 154.
 Lovat, Nancy, 159.
 Laye, Evelyn, 79, 80, 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 166, 167, 179.
 Laye, Gilbert, 160.
 Lawton, Frank, 161.
 Lind, Letty, 33, 39, 55, 56, 63, 64, 65.
 Lewis, Eric, 33, 65.
 Lehar, Franz, 78, 80, 95, 96, 97, 104, 105, 114, 161, 162, 169.
 Leon, Victor, 78, 80.
 Lester, Gertrude, 79.
 Lester, Alfred, 129.
 Livesey, Mrs., 123.
 Leslie, Fred, 62, 70, 125, 129, 136, 198.
 Leslie, H. J., 125, 126.
 Lowenfeld, Henry, 92.
 Locke, W. J., 93.
 Leigh, Dorma, 98, 104.
 Langtry, Lily (Lady de Bathe), 52, 134.
 Lytton, Sir Henry, 73.
 London, Bishop of, 60.
 Leigh, Gracie, 67, 69, 71, 138.
 Lloyd, Frederick, 188.
 Lane, George, 188.
 Lynn, Ralph, 190.
 Leigh, Mary, 165.
 Laidler, Francis, 191.
 Lacy, George, 191.
 Leno, Dan, 191, 197.
 Lockhart, 35.
 Layton, Robert, 194.
 Laurier, Jay, 166, 167.
 Lewis, Nat, 177.
 Laurillard, Edward, 185.
 Leslie, Fred. A., 197.
 Lupino, Barry, 197.
 Lane, Lupino, 197.
 Lupino, Ida, 197.
 Lupino, Stanley, 196, 197.
 Luce, Claire, 196.
 Lane, Grace, 196.
 Lavery, Emmet, 201.
 Lathbury, Stanley, 201.
 Llewellyn, Fewlass, 201.
 Lindsey, Enid, 199, 200.
 Leake, Dorothy, 200.

Lewis, John, 18, 28.
 Lennox, Madame, 31.
 Langton, J. D., 102.
 Morrell, Olive, 69.
 Monckton, Sir John, 69.
 Monckton, Lionel, 45, 68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 105, 109, 118, 127, 128, 138, 192, 195.
 Munding, Herbert, 180.
 Moore, Carrie, 71.
 Matthews, Lester, 180.
 Messenger, Andre, 72, 73, 139.
 Milner, Richard, 191.
 Manning, Ambrose, 72, 147.
 Moody, Hilda, 63, 67, 86, 88.
 May, Maggie, 63.
 Millar, Gertie (Countess of Dudley), 66, 83, 104, 108, 110, 111, 114, 118, 119, 128, 129, 138, 139, 158, 168, 188.
 McLellan, Mrs., 188.
 Mackinder, Lionel, 67, 128.
 Morton, Edward, 67.
 May, Akerman, 69.
 Mann, Tom, 79.
 Mann, Effie, 42, 79.
 Monkhouse, Harry, 55, 65.
 Malone, J. A. E., 50, 52, 53, 80, 123, 138.
 MacOwan, Norman, 201.
 Marton, May, 96, 111.
 Maude, Cyril, 102.
 Mann, Charlton, 123, 138.
 Montague, Richard, 196.
 May, Olive, 129.
 Macdonald, Beatrice, 197.
 Mackay, Leonard, 82, 91, 92, 151, 156.
 Manuel, King of Portugal, 82, 83.
 Michaelis, Robert, 86, 87, 89, 104, 109, 111, 112, 114, 118, 119.
 Marshall, Richard, 197.
 Moffat, Alice, 86.
 McCormack, John, 40, 135.
 Moon, Eva, 199.
 Minetti, Maria, 168, 179.
 Mackay, Rita, 191.
 Moncrieff, Gladys, 169.
 Montefiore, Ernest, 199.
 Mollison, Clifford, 169.
 MacCunn, Hamish, 42.
 Metaxa, Georges, 169.
 Miller, Hugh, 197.
 Mathews, Charles, 153.
 Maclaren, Alison, 195.
 Majilton, A. H., 156.
 Macaulay, R. J., 156.
 Mather, Donald, 185, 188, 194.
 Melville, Winnie, 161.
 Monkman, Dorothy, 148.
 Monkman, Phyllis, 197.

Morgan, Merlin, 42, 123, 145.
 May, Edna, 104, 139, 158, 188,
 190.
 Millar, Webster, 104.
 Maugham, Somerset, 107.
 McArdle, J. M., 111.
 More, Unity, 114, 140.
 Martin, Robert, 196.
 Miller, Edith, 31.
 Molesworth, Ida, 28.
 Merivale, Bernard, 198.
 Mason, R. Halliday, 198.

Norman, E. B., 50.
 Nesville, Juliette, 55.
 Newton, H. Chance, 123, 131, 132,
 175.
 Nicholls, Harry, 127, 152.
 Nainby, Robert, 128, 179, 185.
 Nott, Rosie, 170.
 Nott, Cicely, 170.
 Novello, Ivor, 141, 149, 178, 179.
 Nachez, Tivadar, 103.
 Neale, Nancy, 200.
 Norwood, Eille, 197.
 Nesbit, Cathleen, 196.
 Neilson, Julia, 196.

Orme, Denise, 49, 74.
 O'Connor, Maria, 94.
 Oy-Ra, 96, 97, 104.
 Osgood, Pearl, 196.
 Ostheim, Countess, 133.
 O'Malley, Lieut. and Mrs., 123.
 Offenbach, Jacques, 89, 200.
 Owen, Peter, 200.
 Oldham, Derek, 159, 164, 165.
 Orkney, Countess of, 133.

Princess Victoria, 60.
 Porteous, Gilbert, 69.
 Petrass, Sari, 104, 114, 115, 120.
 Passmore, Walter, 147, 148.
 Percival, Horace, 168, 172.
 Percival, Maud, 74.
 Pusey, Arthur, 168.
 Pechy, Fraulein, 169.
 Paget, Cecil, 49, 169, 174, 201,
 202.
 Penley, W. S., 160.
 Payne, Teddy, 39, 109, 128, 129,
 138, 201.
 Pelissier, H. G., 41.
 Parker, Harry, 86.

Pollard, Alice, 86.
 Pollack, John, 196.
 Pawle, Lennox, 77.
 Pounds, Louie, 79, 138.
 Pounds, Courtice, 138, 189, 195.
 Poulett, Countess, 133.
 Peter the Great, 12.
 Paget, Lady Victor, 133.
 Pallant, Walter, 53, 54.
 Philp, William, 55.
 Philipson, Capt., 93.
 Peisley, Frederick, 199.
 Peel, Eileen, 198.
 Peacock, Kim, 201.
 Percy, W. S., 200.
 Pitt, Arthur, 197.
 Powell, F. Johnson, 196.
 Preston, Ellis J., 196.
 Prussing, Louise, 179.
 Paterson, Susanne, 194.
 Page, Norman, 188.
 Page, Rita, 194.
 Poel, William, 29.
 Phipps, C. J., 17.
 Plunket, Paul, 91, 96.
 Parkin, Cecil, 172.
 Pinero, Sir A. W., 182.

Queen Alexandra, 117, 128, 154.
 Queen Mary, 33, 60, 95, 116, 145,
 155, 164, 169.
 Queen Victoria, 117.
 Quinlan, Opera Company, 118.
 Queen, George, 191.
 Queen Elizabeth, 11.

Rehan, Ada, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21,
 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29,
 30, 31, 200.
 Ray, Gabrielle, 89, 128, 145, 190.
 Ranza, Kate, 112.
 Rossi, Cesare, 30.
 Ralland, Herbert, 112, 113.
 Ronalds, Frank, 114.
 Ryan, E. H., 114.
 Russell, Winsome, 118.
 Russell, Scott, 63, 67, 74.
 Risque, W. H., 71.
 Ross, Adrian, 63, 68, 74, 86, 104,
 105, 111, 114, 118, 148, 179,
 192.
 Reeve, Ada, 68, 189.
 Rubens, Paul, 45, 68, 70, 71, 88,
 118, 119, 128, 138, 139, 141,
 142, 179, 194.
 Roberts, Arthur, 45, 62, 66, 84,
 92, 192.

- Reid, Emilie, 48.
 Romano, 115.
 Royce, Edward, 50, 89, 90, 92,
 96, 104, 111, 112, 114, 118,
 123, 185.
 Royce, E. W., 89, 90, 185, 198.
 Rhodes, Stanley, 93.
 Rhodes, Cecil, 93.
 Runtz, Ernest, 128.
 Ross, Frederick, 148.
 Royston, Roy, 156.
 Russell, Mabel, 42, 49, 77, 91, 92,
 93, 104, 129.
 Roberts, Ralph, 77, 201.
 Richards, George, 197.
 Reynolds, T. Maxwell, 196.
 Reichert, Heinz, 179.
 Reinhardt, Max, 136.
 Raine, Jack, 180.
 Reader, Ralph, 187.
 Robinson, Gerald, 185.
 Raymond, Henry, 179.
 Robinson, G. P., 200.
 Richards, Darroll, 200.
 Robert, Eugene, 201.
 Rolfe, Dudley, 189.
 Reynolds, E. Vivian, 198.
 Revnell and West, 190.
 Russell, Leonard, 154.
 Rejane, Mdm., 136.
 Rivarde, Achille, 31.
 Ryder, Capt., 12.
 Rawlins, W. H., 82, 112.
 Rolph, Dudley, 198.
 Randolph, Elsie, 164, 177.
 Rodgers, Richard, 177.
 Roland, Eric, 183.
 Rawlinson, Gerald, 197.
 Robinson, Mr., 202.

 Stanley, Lord, 135.
 Shaw, Bernard, 135.
 Shaw, Lucy Carr, 136.
 Spain, Elsie, 138, 199.
 Stable, Mr. Justice, 144.
 Shale, Tom, 148, 149, 151.
 Stirling, Jean, 151, 195.
 Schanzer, Rudolph, 156.
 Stroud, Gregory, 167.
 Sherman, Hal, 168.
 Stuart, Leslie, 39, 40, 188, 189.
 Stevens, Alex, 42.
 Soutar, J. Farren, 33, 65.
 Sully, Mariette, 74.
 Souray, Eleanor, 74.
 Stein, Leo, 80.
 Seymour, Madeline, 42, 79, 96,
 104, 112, 119, 158, 196.
 Sarony, May, 86.

 Sullivan, Sir Arthur, 21, 64, 65,
 73, 89, 96, 107, 108, 184.
 Strauss, 89.
 Straus, Oscar, 111, 167.
 St. John, Nora and Peg, 191.
 Spray, William, 129, 148, 149,
 151.
 Sydney, Ethel, 129.
 Suffolk, Countess of, 133.
 Swaffer, Hannen, 133, 167, 173,
 178, 185.
 Stephenson, B. C., 125.
 St. John, Florence, 127.
 Stuart, May Leslie, 96.
 Shakespeare, William, 23, 24, 29,
 34, 101, 148, 170, 176.
 Sinden, Topsy, 43, 45, 67, 69,
 71, 119.
 Sims, Geo. R., 45.
 Sevensing, Nina, 71, 72, 74.
 Stocker, Doris, 71, 72, 96.
 St. George, Gracie, 72.
 Sardou, V., 21, 74.
 Studholme, Marie, 65, 68, 128,
 134.
 Squire, W. H., 103.
 Santley, Sir Charles, 103.
 Sealby, Mabel, 118, 119, 129, 141,
 144, 154.
 Spencer, Elsie, 118.
 Stewart, Connie, 118.
 Stephan, Ernest, 119.
 Stephens, Stephanie, 190.
 Seymour, Louis J., 191.
 Simpson, Ronald, 198.
 Shine, J. L., 192.
 St. John, Herbert, 48.
 Severin, Gaston, 198.
 Siddons, Rupert, 198.
 Siddons, Mrs., 59.
 Squire, Ronald, 198, 199.
 Swinburne, Nora, 196.
 Sherriff, R. C., 199.
 Scott-Gatty, A., 199.
 Sheffield, Leo., 183, 184, 187,
 188, 194.
 Schlesinger, Isodore W., 185.
 Suffolk, Earl of, 186, 187.
 Stanley, Earle, 185.
 Schubert, Franz, 179, 180.
 Scott, Sir Walter, 180.
 Sirmay, Albert, 180.
 Sterne, Kenneth, 183.
 Shotter, Winifred, 197.
 Smith, Sebastian, 197.
 Shepley, Michael, 196.
 Stoker, H. G., 196.
 Stuart, Dudley, 196.
 Salisbury, Marquis of, 11, 12.
 Scott, Clement, 15, 182.
 Sheridan, R. Brinsley, 27.
 Stirling, Antoinette, 31.
 Sherwin, Mdm. Amy, 31.

Sax-Coburg, Duchess of, 31.
Saunders, Mrs., 24.
Sherbrooke, Mrs. Dorothy, 36,
123, 139.
Stoll, Sir Oswald, 79.

Talbot, Howard, 70, 71, 142.
Tunbridge, Thomas M., 113.
Tree, Sir Herbert, 93, 95, 99,
102, 103, 142.
Tree, Viola, 196.
Torrington, Countess, 133.
Tresmand, Ivy, 156, 159, 167,
168, 187.
Thorndike, Dame Sybil, 190.
Tempest, Dame Marie, 33, 34, 55,
56, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 67,
68, 126, 188, 202.
Turner, John Hastings, 166, 180.
Taylor, Nellie, 140.
Tate, James W., 143, 144.
Terriss, William, 31, 32.
Terriss, Ellaline (Lady Hicks),
141, 158, 193.
Thomas, Henry, 197.
Trimmingham, Ernest, 185.
Toole, J. L., 23.
Tearle, Godfrey, 198.
Thompson, A. M., 170.
Tearle, Malcolm, 198.
Trevor, Austin, 197.
Thaw, Jane, 198.
Traill, Peter, 198.
Thorne, Eric, 82, 91, 92, 112.
Terraine, Alfred, 90, 114, 164.
Tanner, James T., 68, 127, 138.
Thorne, Leonard, 201.
Tilton, Franklyn, 195.
Tunney, Gene, 139.
Tomlin, Marjorie, 200.
Tucker, Sophie, 187.
Trouncer, Cecil, 199.
Tilley, Vesta (Lady de Frece), 81,
147, 164.
Terry, Dame Ellen, 23, 25, 31,
59, 200.
Terry, Edward, 15, 31, 91, 136,
198.
Tennyson, Lord, 26.
Twain, Mark, 21.
Todd, J. Garrett, 48, 49.
Tours, Frank, 42, 142.
Tauber, Richard, 162, 180.

Vaughan, Kate, 39, 91, 198.
Vicars, Harold, 42.
Venne, Lottie, 33, 65.
Victor, Lionel, 97, 149, 179.
Volar, Deborah, 72, 79, 112.
Vivian, Freda, 72.
Vanloo, A., 72.
Vincent, Ruth, 73.
Vaughan, Father Bernard, 189.
Vanne, Wilma, 191, 195.
Von Brunner, Beatrice, 96.
Verno, Jerry, 185, 197.
Vilven, Stanley, 196.
Vestris, Mdme., 27.
Vigay, Fred, 118.
Vanbrugh, Violet, 26, 199, 200.

Whalley, Norma, 91.
Wyndham, Sir Charles, 102, 136.
Wehlen, Emmy, 79, 84, 89, 129.
White, James, 34, 134, 139, 144,
164, 166, 167, 168, 169, 171,
172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177,
185.
Waters, James, 133.
Wright, Fred, 57.
Wright, Junr., Fred, 57, 128.
Wright, Huntley, 35, 36, 49, 55,
63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 71, 72, 74,
75, 96, 97, 138, 151, 152, 156,
158, 164, 183, 184.
Wood, Arthur, 42, 148, 156, 159,
166, 167, 168, 169, 185.
Wallis, Bertram, 34, 95, 97, 98,
154, 155, 164, 169.
Welch, Kate, 104, 118, 158.
Warrington, Mr. Justice, 119.
Waddington, Patrick, 188, 189,
194.
Ward, Dorothy, 188, 189, 190,
195.
Ward, Ted, 189.
Weaver, Wyn, 191.
Woodall, Doris, 147.
Wilson, Roy, 147.
Welchman, Harry, 151, 156, 157,
183.
Willard, E. S., 152.
Walker, Mayor, Jimmy, 139.
Wontner, Arthur, 140, 144.
Wright, Bertie, 57.
Waller, Jack, 155.
Welisch, Ernest, 156.
Wellesley, Alfred, 154, 187.
Williams, Arthur, 125.
Wellesley, Arthur (Earl Cowley),
118, 154.
Workman, C. H., 165.
Wade, Standley, 50.

Underwood, Neta, 167.
Unger, Gladys, 114, 119.

- Wodehouse, P. G., 197.
Waring, Francis, 197, 199.
Waters, Ronald, 196.
White, J. Fisher, 196.
Wycherley, William, 24.
Wyn, Marjery, 183.
Weguelin, Thomas, 180.
West, Regina, 198.
Winter, Jessie, 198.
Watkyn, Arthur, 199.
Warner, Richard, 199.
Willard, Edmund, 199.
Warner Bros., 202.
Wilson, Professor Erasmus, 27.
Woffington, Margaret, 23.
Willner, A. M., 86, 87, 104, 179.
Warde, Willie, 50, 51, 57, 69, 71,
74, 86, 89, 96, 111, 118.
Wakefield, Hugh, 114.
Walls, Tom, 114, 115, 118, 119,
134, 139.
Wright, Marie, 57.
Wright, Haidee, 57.
Winn, Fred, 87.
Yacco, Sadi, 68.
Yohe, May, 195.
Yardley, William, 15.
Ziegler, F., 42.
-

AIDE-de-CAMP'S LIBRARY

Accn. No.....

1. Books may be retained for a period not exceeding fifteen days.